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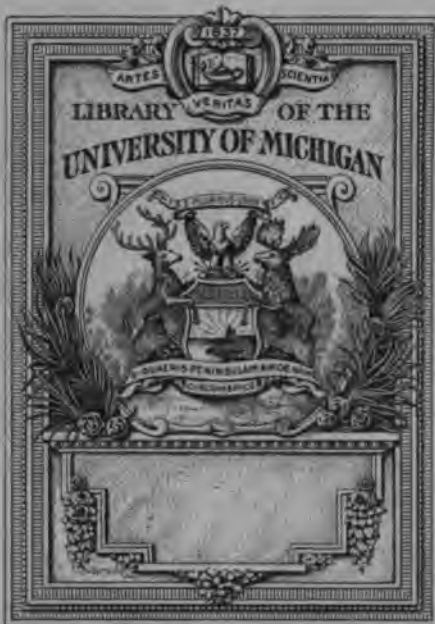
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THE  
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION:

BEING

THE LETTERS OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, SILAS DEANE, JOHN ADAMS, JOHN JAY,  
ARTHUR LEE, WILLIAM LEE, RALPH IZARD, FRANCIS DANA, WILLIAM  
CARMICHAEL, HENRY LAURENS, JOHN LAURENS, M. DUMAS, AND  
OTHERS, CONCERNING THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE  
UNITED STATES DURING THE WHOLE REVOLUTION;

TOGETHER WITH

THE LETTERS IN REPLY FROM THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS, AND  
THE SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

ALSO,

THE ENTIRE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE FRENCH MINISTERS, GERARD AND  
LUZERNE, WITH CONGRESS.

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Published under the direction of the President of the United States, from the original Manuscripts  
in the Department of State, conformably to a Resolution of Congress, of March 27th, 1818.

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EDITED BY JARED SPARKS.

VOL. II.

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NEW EDITION: WASHINGTON:  
PUBLISHED BY JOHN C. RIVES.  
1857.

*Resolution of Congress of March 27th, 1818.*

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*Resolution directing the Publication and Distribution of the Journal and Proceedings of the Convention which formed the present Constitution of the United States.*

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Journal of the Convention which formed the present Constitution of the United States, now remaining in the office of the Secretary of State, and all Acts and Proceedings of that Convention which are in possession of the Government of the United States, be published under the direction of the President of the United States, together with the Secret Journals of the Acts and Proceedings, and the Foreign Correspondence of the Congress of the United States, from the first meeting thereof down to the date of the ratification of the definitive treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States, in the year seventeen hundred and eighty-three, except such parts of the said Foreign Correspondence as the President of the United States may deem it improper at this time to publish. And that one thousand copies thereof be printed, of which one copy shall be furnished to each member of the present Congress; and the residue shall remain subject to the future disposition of Congress.*

*APPROVED, March 27th, 1818.*

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COMPLETE IN SIX VOLUMES.

STEREOTYPED.

Jackson Hall, Washington.

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- To William Carmichael.** Passy, December 15th, 1783.....492  
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- To the President of Congress.** Passy, December 26th, 1783..500  
 Recommends Mr. Hodgson as Consul in London.

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 The Emperor has agreed to the propositions of Congress concerning commercial regulations between the two Powers.

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**To Charles Thomson.** Passy, November 11th, 1784. . . . .518

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**THE CORRESPONDENCE**

**OF**

**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,**

**COMMISSIONER AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY  
TO THE COURT OF FRANCE, AND COMMISSIONER  
FOR NEGOTIATING A PEACE.**

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**Vol. II.—1**





At the beginning of the Revolution, DR. FRANKLIN was in England, where he had resided several years as an agent for Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia. He returned to America in the spring of 1775, and was shortly after elected a member of Congress. In that body he held the rank, to which his great talents and patriotism entitled him, and was chosen one of the Committee of Secret Correspondence, for transacting foreign affairs.

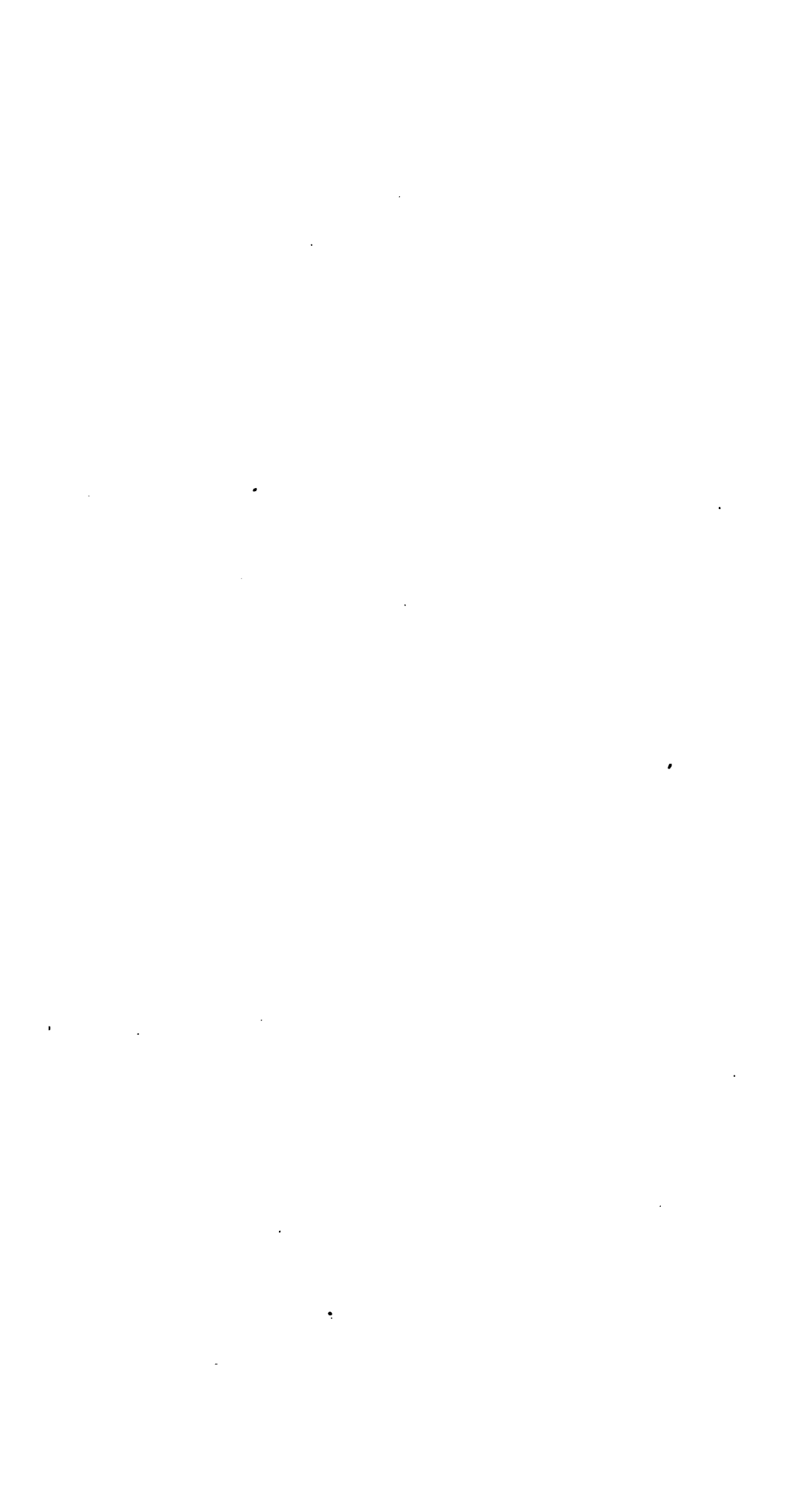
On the 26th of September, 1776, he was elected a Commissioner to the Court of France, in conjunction with Silas Deane and Thomas Jefferson. Immediately after his appointment he hastened preparations for his departure. Mean time Mr. Jefferson declined serving, and Arthur Lee was chosen in his place. Dr. Franklin set off from Philadelphia on his voyage, October 26th, and entered Quiberon Bay, on the coast of France, November 29th, after a fatiguing passage. He was now seventy-one years of age. He proceeded to Nantes, where he remained a few days to recruit himself, and arrived in Paris about the 20th of December. Here he found Mr. Deane, and they were soon after joined by Mr. Lee.

Little was done by the Commissioners in Paris for more than a year, as France was not then prepared to take an open part against England. The success of the American arms against Burgoyne became the turning point in the French Cabinet, and they immediately consented to make treaties of amity and commerce with the United States, which were definitively signed on the 6th of February, 1778. This great work being finished, Congress deemed it expedient to dissolve the Commission by appointing a Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of France. The choice fell on Dr. Franklin, and, notwithstanding his advanced age, and the arduous nature of the office, he accepted the appointment, and discharged the entire duties of it to the end of the Revolution.

While holding the place of joint Commissioner in France, Congress elected him, on the 1st of January, 1777, to a separate mission to the Court of Spain. Upon this mission, however, he never entered, and it was afterwards transferred to Arthur Lee.

Towards the close of the war, Dr. Franklin strenuously urged Congress to permit him to return to his own country, requesting that a successor might be sent out, whose years and strength would better qualify him to endure the labors and perform the services of his station. But Congress did not listen to this petition. His counsels and experience were thought essential to the management of the important concerns then pending. He took a leading part in all the negociations for peace, and, in conjunction with John Adams, John Jay, and Henry Laurens, signed the preliminary articles, November 30th, 1782, and the definitive treaty, September 3d, 1783. On the 3d of April, of the same year, he concluded a treaty of amity and commerce, with the Swedish Minister in Paris, between Sweden and the United States.

Mr. Jefferson at length arrived in Paris as his successor, and Dr. Franklin returned to Philadelphia in September, 1785, after an absence of nine years, during the whole of which time he had been engaged in a most active, laborious, and successful service for his country.



# THE CORRESPONDENCE

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

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TO JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Nantes, December 8th, 1776.

Sir,

In thirty days after we left the Capes of Delaware, we came to an anchor in Quiberon Bay. I remained on board four days, expecting a change of wind proper to carry the ship into the river Loire; but the wind seemed fixed in an opposite quarter. I landed at Aury, and with some difficulty got hither, the road not being well supplied with means of conveyance. Two days before we saw land, we met a brigantine from Bordeaux belonging to Cork, and another from Rochefort belonging to Hull, both of which were taken. The first had on board staves, tar, turpentine, and claret; the other coniac brandy and flaxseed. There is some difficulty in determining what to do with them, as they are scarce worth sending to America, and the mind of the French Court, with regard to prizes brought into their ports, is not yet known. It is certainly contrary to their treaties with Britain to permit the sale of them, and we have no regular means of trying and condemning them. There are, however, many here who would purchase prizes, we having already had several offers from persons who are willing to take upon themselves all consequences as to the illegality. Captain Wickes, as soon as he can get his refreshment, intends to cruise in the channel.

Our friends in France have been a good deal dejected with the Gazette accounts of advantages obtained against us by the British troops. I have helped them here to recover their spirits a little, by assuring them that we still face the enemy, and were under no apprehension of their armies being able to complete their junction. I understand that Mr. Lee has lately been in Paris, that Mr. Deane is still there, and that an underhand supply is obtained from the Government of two hundred brass field-pieces, thirty thousand firelocks, and some other military stores, which are now shipping for America, and will be convoyed by a ship of war. The Court of England (Mr. Penet tells me, from whom I have the above intelligence) had the folly to demand Mr. Deane to be delivered up, but were refused.

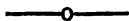
Our voyage, though not long, was rough, and I feel myself weakened by it, but I now recover strength daily, and in a few days shall be able to undertake the journey to Paris. I have not yet taken any public character, thinking it prudent first to know whether the Court is ready and willing to receive Ministers publicly from the Congress, that we may neither embarrass her on the one hand, nor subject ourselves to the hazard of a disgraceful refusal on the other. I have despatched an express to Mr. Deane, with the letters that I had for him from the Committee, and a copy of our commission, that he may immediately make the proper inquiries, and give me information. In the mean time, I find it generally supposed here that I am sent to negotiate, and that opinion appears to give great pleasure, if I can judge by the extreme civilities I meet with from numbers of the principal people, who have done me the honor to visit me.

I have desired Mr. Deane, by some speedy and safe means, to give Mr. Lee notice of his appointment. I find several vessels here laden with military stores for America, just ready to sail. On the whole, there is the greatest prospect that we shall be well provided for another campaign, and much stronger than we were last. A Spanish fleet has sailed with seven thousand land forces, foot, and some horse; their destination unknown, but supposed against the Portuguese in Brazil. Both France and England are preparing strong fleets; and it is said that all the Powers of Europe are preparing for war, apprehending that a general one cannot be very far distant. When I arrive at Paris I shall be able to write with

more certainty. I beg you to present my duty to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful endeavors in their service.

With the sincerest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be,  
&c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



## TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE.

Nantes, December 8th, 1776.

Gentlemen,

After a short, but rough passage of thirty days, we anchored in Quiberon Bay, the wind not suiting to enter the Loire. Captain Wickes did every thing in his power to make the voyage comfortable to me; and I was much pleased with what I saw of his conduct as an officer when, on supposed occasions, we made preparation for engagement, the good order and readiness with which it was done, being far beyond my expectations, and I believe equal to any thing of the kind in the best ships of the King's fleet. He seems to have also a very good set of officers under him. I hope they will all in good time be promoted. He met and took two prizes, brigantines, one belonging to Cork, laden with staves, pitch, tar, turpentine, and claret; the other to Hull, with a cargo of flaxseed and brandy. The captains have made some propositions of ransom, which, perhaps, may be accepted, as there is yet no means of condemning them here, and they are scarce worth sending to America. The ship is yet in Quiberon Bay, with her prizes. I came hither from thence, seventy miles, by land. I am made extremely welcome here, where America has many friends. As soon as I have recovered strength enough for the journey, which, I hope, will be in a very few days, I shall set out for Paris. My letter to the President will inform you of some other particulars.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *December 10th.* I have just learnt that eighty pieces of cannon, all brass, with carriages, braces, and every thing fit for immediate service, were embarked in a frigate from Havre, which is sailed; the rest were to go in another frigate of thirty-six guns.

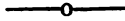
FROM THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE TO BENJAMIN  
FRANKLIN.

Baltimore, January 1st, 1777.

Sir,

Congress relying on your wisdom and integrity, and well knowing the importance of the case, have appointed you their Commissioner to negotiate a treaty of friendship and commerce with the Court of Spain.\* The idea of Congress on this subject you will find in the instructions sent by this opportunity to yourself and the other Commissioners at the Court of France. Your commission for this special service we have now the honor to enclose you.

We are, with great respect and esteem, honorable sir, yours, &c.,  
B. HARRISON,  
R. H. LEE,  
J. WITHERSPOON,  
W. HOOPER.



TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE.

Paris, January 4th, 1777.

Gentlemen,

I arrived here about two weeks since, where I found Mr. Deane. Mr. Lee has since joined us from London. We have had an audience of the Minister, Count de Vergennes, and were respectfully received. We left for his consideration a sketch of the proposed treaty.† We are to wait upon him to-morrow with a strong memorial, requesting the aids mentioned in our instructions. By his advice, we have had an interview with the Spanish Ambassador, Count d'Aranda, who seems well disposed towards us, and will forward copies of our memorials to his Court, which will act, he says, in perfect concert with this.

Their fleets are said to be in fine order, manned and fit for sea. The cry of this nation is for us, but the Court it is thought, views an approaching war with reluctance. The press continues in England.

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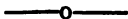
\* See the *Secret Journals of Congress*, vol. 2, pp. 38, 41, 42.

† See this sketch in the *Secret Journals of Congress*, vol. 2. p. 7.

As soon as we can receive a positive answer from these Courts, we shall despatch an express with it.

I am, gentlemen, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, January 20th, 1777.

Dear Sir,

The bearer, Captain Balm, is strongly recommended to me as a very able officer of horse, and capable of being extremely useful to us, in forming a body of men for that service. As he has otherwise an excellent character, I take the liberty of recommending him to my friends as a stranger of merit, worthy of their civilities, and to the Congress as an officer, who, if employed, may greatly serve a cause which he has sincerely at heart.

With great respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE COUNT D'ARANDA, SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO THE COURT OF FRANCE.

Passy,\* April 7th, 1777.

Sir,

I left in your Excellency's hands, to be communicated, if you please, to your Court, a duplicate of the commission from Congress appointing me to go to Spain as their Minister Plenipotentiary. But as I understand that the receiving such a Minister is not at present thought convenient, and I am sure the Congress would have nothing done that might incommode in the least a Court they so much respect, I shall, therefore, postpone that journey till circumstances may make it more suitable. In the mean time, I beg leave to lay before his Catholic Majesty, through the hands of your Excellency, the propositions contained in a resolution of Congress, dated December 30th, 1776, viz :

“That if his Catholic Majesty will join with the United States in a war against Great Britain, they will assist in reducing to the

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\* Passy is a small town, about three miles from Paris, on the banks of the Seine. Dr. Franklin lived here during the whole of his residence in France.



possession of Spain the town and harbor of Pensacola ; provided the inhabitants of the United States shall have the free navigation of the Mississippi, and the use of the harbor of Pensacola ; and will, (provided it shall be true, that his Portuguese Majesty has insultingly expelled the vessels of these States from his ports, or has confiscated any such vessels,) declare war against the said King, if that measure shall be agreeable to, and supported by, the Courts of France and Spain."

It is understood that the strictest union subsists between those two Courts ; and in case Spain and France should think fit to attempt the conquest of the English sugar islands, Congress have further proposed to furnish provisions to the amount of two millions of dollars, and to join the fleet employed on the occasion with six frigates of not less than twenty-four guns each, manned and fitted for service ; and to render any other assistance which may be in their power, as becomes good allies ; without desiring for themselves the possession of any of the said islands.

These propositions are subject to discussion, and to receive such modification as may be found proper.

With great respect, I have the honor to be your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Paris, June 13th, 1777.

Sir,

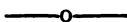
The bearer, M. le Comte Kotkouski, a Polish officer, is recommended to me, by several persons of worth here, as a man of experience in military affairs, and of tried bravery. He has lost his family and estate in Poland, by fighting there in the cause of liberty, and wishes, by engaging in the same cause, to find a new country and new friends in America. Count Pulaski, who was a general of the confederates in Poland, and who is gone to join you, is esteemed one of the greatest officers in Europe. He can give you the character of this M. Kotkouski, who served under him as lieutenant colonel.

It is with regret that I give letters of introduction to foreign officers, fearing that you may be troubled with more than you can

provide for, or employ to their and your own satisfaction. When particular cases seem to have a claim to such letters, I hope you will excuse my taking the liberty. I give no expectations to those who apply for them; I promise nothing, I acquaint them that their being placed when they arrive is a great uncertainty, and that the voyage being long, expensive, and hazardous, I counsel them not to undertake it. This honest gentleman's zeal is not to be discouraged by such means; he determines to go and serve as a volunteer, if he cannot be employed immediately as an officer; but I wish and hope that your Excellency may find a better situation for him, and that he will be a useful officer. He has the advantage of understanding English, and will soon speak it intelligibly. He also speaks German, and some other European languages, and the Latin.

With the truest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

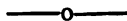
Paris, June 13th, 1777.

Sir,

The person who will have the honor of delivering this to your Excellency, is Monsieur le Baron de Frey, who is well recommended to me as an officer of experience and merit, with a request that I would give him a letter of introduction. I have acquainted him, that you are rather overstocked with officers, and that his obtaining employment in your army is an uncertainty; but his zeal for the American cause is too great for any discouragements I can lay before him, and he goes over at his own expense, to take his chance, which is a mark of attachment that merits our regard. He will show your Excellency the commissions and proofs of his military service hitherto, and I beg leave to recommend him to your notice.

With the sincerest esteem and respect,

B. FRANKLIN.



M. DUBOURG TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, September 8th, 1777.

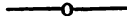
My dear Sir,

I should be much obliged to you, if you would be so good as to

give a letter of recommendation to some one of the chiefs of your army, in favor of a young man full of courage, and also of distinguished talents, who is at Bordeaux, ready to embark for America, where he proposes to settle himself in Pennsylvania, after having served in quality of volunteer, or otherwise, during the war. His name is Gerard. He carries with him a little adventure, sufficient for supporting him some years, and afterwards, if it is there customary, his father will make over to him his portion. I interest myself particularly in his favor, because he is the brother-in-law of one of our honestest commissaries.

I have the honor to wish you a good day, and to reiterate the assurances of my inviolable attachment.

DUBOURG.



TO RICHARD PETERS.

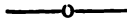
Passy, September 12th, 1777.

Sir,

The bearer, Monsieur Gerard, is recommended to me by M. Dubourg, a gentleman of distinction here, and a hearty friend to our cause. I enclose his letter, that you may see the favorable manner in which he speaks of M. Gerard. I thereupon take the liberty of recommending the young gentleman to your civilities and advice, as he will be quite a stranger there, and to request that you would put him in the way of serving as a volunteer in our armies.

I am, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



REMARKS ON A LOAN FOR THE UNITED STATES.\*

In borrowing money, a man's credit depends on some, or all, of the following particulars :

First, His known conduct respecting former loans, and his punctuality in discharging them.

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\* This paper was written by Dr. Franklin in the summer of 1777, with the view of convincing Europeans, that it was more eligible to lend money to the United States at that time than to England. It was translated and sent to different parts of Europe. In Mr. Arthur Lee's letter to Baron de Schulenbug, dated September 21st, 1777, he mentions having sent a copy of it to that Minister.

Secondly, His industry.

Thirdly, His frugality.

Fourthly, The amount and the certainty of his income, and the freedom of his estate from the incumbrances of prior debts.

Fifthly, His well founded prospects of greater future ability, by the improvement of his estate in value, and by aids from others.

Sixthly, His known prudence in managing his general affairs, and the advantage they will probably receive from the loan which he desires.

Seventhly, His known probity and honest character, manifested by his voluntary discharge of debts, which he could not have been legally compelled to pay.

The circumstances, which give credit to an *individual*, ought to have, and will have, their weight upon the lenders of money to *public bodies* or nations. If then we consider and compare Britain and America in these several particulars, upon the question, "To which is it safest to lend money?" we shall find—

1. Respecting *former loans*; that America, who borrowed ten millions during the last war, for the maintenance of her army of 25,000 men and other charges, had faithfully discharged and paid that debt, and all her other debts, in 1772; whereas Britain, during those ten years of peace and profitable commerce, had made little or no reduction of her debt; but on the contrary, from time to time, diminished the hopes of her creditors, by a wanton diversion and misapplication of the sinking fund destined for discharging it.

2. Respecting *industry*; every man in America is employed; the greater part in cultivating their own lands, the rest in handicrafts, navigation, and commerce. An idle man there is a rarity; idleness and inutility are disgraceful. In England the number of that character is immense; fashion has spread it far and wide; hence the embarrassments of private fortunes, and the daily bankruptcies arising from a universal fondness for appearance and expensive pleasures; and hence, in some degree, the mismanagement of public business; for habits of business, and ability in it, are acquired only by practice; and where universal dissipation, and the perpetual pursuit of amusement are the mode, the youth educated in it can rarely afterwards acquire that patient attention and close application to affairs which are so necessary to a statesman charged with the care of national welfare. Hence their frequent errors in policy, and hence the weariness at

public councils, and backwardness in going to them, the constant unwillingness to engage in any measure that requires thought and consideration, and the readiness for postponing every new proposition; which postponing is therefore the only part of business they come to be expert in, an expertness produced necessarily by so much daily practice. Whereas, in America, men bred to close employment in their private affairs, attend with ease to those of the public when engaged in them, and nothing fails through negligence.

3. Respecting *frugality*; the manner of living in America is more simple and less expensive than in England; plain tables, plain clothing, and plain furniture in houses prevail, with few carriages of pleasure; there an expensive appearance hurts credit, and is avoided; in England it is often assumed to gain credit, and continued to ruin. Respecting *public affairs*, the difference is still greater. In England the salaries of officers and emoluments of office are enormous. The King has a million sterling per annum, and yet cannot maintain his family free of debt; Secretaries of State, Lords of Treasury, Admiralty, &c., have vast appointments; an Auditor of the Exchequer has sixpence in the pound, or a fortieth part of all the public money expended by the nation; so that when a war costs forty millions, one million is paid to him: an Inspector of the Mint, in the last new coinage, received as his fee £65,000 sterling per annum; to all which rewards no service these gentlemen can render the public is by any means equivalent. All this is paid by the people, who are oppressed by taxes so occasioned, and thereby rendered less able to contribute to the payment of necessary national debts. In America, salaries, where indispensable, are extremely low; but much of the public business is done gratis. The honor of serving the public ably and faithfully is deemed sufficient. *Public spirit* really exists there, and has great effects. In England it is universally deemed a nonentity, and whoever pretends to it is laughed at as a fool, or suspected as a knave. The committees of Congress which form the Board of War, the Board of Treasury, the Board of Foreign Affairs, the Naval Board, that for Accounts, &c., all attend the business of their respective functions without any salary or emolument whatever, though they spend in it much more of their time than any Lord of the Treasury or Admiralty in England can spare from his amusements. A British Minister lately computed that the whole expense of the Americans in their *civil* government, over three

millions of people, amounted to but £70,000 sterling, and drew from thence a conclusion that they ought to be taxed until their expense was equal in proportion to that which it costs Great Britain to govern eight millions. He had no idea of a contrary conclusion, that if three millions may be well governed for £70,000, eight millions may be as well governed for three times that sum, and that therefore the expense of his own Government should be diminished. In that corrupted nation, no man is ashamed of being concerned in lucrative *Government jobs*, in which the public money is egregiously misapplied and squandered, the Treasury pillaged, and more numerous and heavy taxes accumulated, to the great oppression of the people. But the prospect of a greater number of such jobs by a war is an inducement with many to cry out for war upon all occasions, and to oppose every proposition of peace. Hence the constant increase of the national debt, and the absolute improbability of its ever being discharged.

4. Respecting the *amount and certainty of income, and solidity of security*; the whole thirteen States of America are engaged for the payment of every debt contracted by the Congress, and the debt to be contracted by the present war is the *only* debt they will have to pay; all, or nearly all, the former debts of particular Colonies being already discharged. Whereas, England will have to pay not only the enormous debt this war must occasion, but all their vast preceding debt, or the interest of it; and while America is enriching itself by prizes made upon the British commerce more than ever it did by any commerce of its own, under the restraints of a British monopoly, and the diminution of its revenues, and of course less able to discharge the present indiscreet increase of its expenses.

5. Respecting prospects of greater *future ability*, Britain has none such. Her islands are circumscribed by the ocean; and, excepting a few parks or forests, she has no new land to cultivate, and cannot therefore extend her improvements. Her numbers, too, instead of increasing from increased subsistence, are continually diminishing from growing luxury and the increasing difficulties of maintaining families, which of course discourage early marriages. Thus she will have fewer people to assist in paying her debts, and that diminishing number will be poorer. America, on the contrary, has, besides her lands already cultivated, a vast territory yet to be cultivated; which, being cultivated, continually increases in value

with the increase of people; and the people, who double themselves by a *natural propagation* every twenty-five years, will double yet faster by the accession of *strangers*, as long as lands are to be had for new families; so that every twenty years there will be a double number of inhabitants obliged to discharge the public debts; and those inhabitants being more opulent may pay their shares with greater ease.

6. Respecting *prudence* in general affairs, and the advantages to be expected from the loan desired; the Americans are cultivators of land; those engaged in fishery and commerce are few compared with the others. They have ever conducted their several Governments with wisdom, avoiding wars and vain expensive projects, delighting only in their peaceable occupations, which must, considering the extent of their uncultivated territory, find them employment till for ages. Whereas England, ever unquiet, ambitious, avaricious, imprudent, and quarrelsome, is half of the time engaged in war, always at an expense infinitely greater than the advantages to be obtained by it, if successful. Thus they made war against Spain in 1739 for a claim of about £95,000, (scarce a groat for each individual of the nation,) and spent forty millions sterling in the war, and the lives of fifty thousand men; and finally made peace without obtaining satisfaction for the sum claimed. Indeed, there is scarce a nation in Europe against which she has not made war on some frivolous pretext or other, and thereby imprudently accumulated a debt that has brought her on the verge of bankruptcy. But the most indiscreet of all her wars is the present against America, with whom she might for ages have preserved her profitable connexion only by a just and equitable conduct. She is now acting like a mad shop-keeper, who, by beating those that pass his doors, attempts to make them come in and be his customers. America cannot submit to such treatment without being first ruined, and, being ruined, her custom will be worth nothing. England, to effect this, is increasing her debt, and irretrievably ruining herself. America, on the other hand, aims only to establish her liberty and that freedom of commerce which will be advantageous to all Europe; and by abolishing that monopoly which she labored under, she will profit infinitely more than enough to repay any debt which she may contract to accomplish it.

7. Respecting *character in the honest payment of debts*; the

punctuality with which America has discharged her public debts was shown under the first head. And the general good disposition of the people to such punctuality has been manifested in their faithful payment of *private* debts to England, since the commencement of this war. There were not wanting some politicians (in America) who proposed *stopping that payment*, until peace should be restored, alleging, that in the usual course of commerce, and of the credit given, there was always a debt existing equal to the trade of eighteen months; that the trade amounting to five millions sterling per annum, the debt must be seven millions and a half; that this sum paid to the British merchants would operate to prevent that distress intended to be brought upon Britain by our stoppage of commerce with her; for the merchants receiving this money, and no orders with it for further supplies, would either lay it out in public funds, or in employing manufacturers to accumulate goods for a future hungry market in America, upon an expected accommodation, by which means the funds would be kept up, and the manufacturers prevented from murmuring. *But against this it was alleged* that injuries from Ministers should not be revenged on merchants; that the credit was in consequence of private contracts made in confidence of good faith; that these ought to be held sacred and faithfully complied with; for that, whatever public utility might be supposed to arise from a breach of private faith, it was unjust, and would in the end be found unwise, honesty being in truth the best policy. On this principle the proposition was universally rejected; and though the English prosecuted the war with unexampled barbarity, burning our defenceless towns in the midst of winter, and arming savages against us, the debt was punctually paid, and the merchants of London have testified to the Parliament, and will testify to all the world, that from their experience in dealing with us they had, before the war, no apprehension of our unfairness, and that since the war they have been convinced that their good opinion of us was well founded. England, on the contrary, an old, corrupt Government, extravagant and profligate nation, sees herself deep in debt, which she is in no condition to pay, and yet is madly and dishonestly running deeper, without any possibility of discharging her debt but by a public bankruptcy.

It appears, therefore, from the general industry, frugality, ability, prudence, and virtue of America, that she is a much safer debtor



than Britain; to say nothing of the satisfaction generous minds must have in reflecting that, by loans to America, they are opposing tyranny, and aiding the cause of liberty, which is the cause of all mankind.



TO DAVID HARTLEY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

Passy, October 14th, 1777.

Dear Sir,

I received duly your letter of May 2d, 1777, including a copy of one you had sent me the year before, which never came to hand, and which it seems has been the case with some I wrote to you from America. Filled though our letters have always been with sentiments of good will to both countries, and earnest desires of preventing their ruin and promoting their mutual felicity, I have been apprehensive that, if it were known that a correspondence subsisted between us, it might be attended with inconvenience to you. I have therefore been backward in writing, not caring to trust the post, and not well knowing who else to trust with my letters. But being now assured of a safe conveyance, I venture to write to you, especially as I think the subject such a one as you may receive a letter upon without censure.

Happy should I have been, if the honest warnings I gave of the fatal separation of interests, as well as affections, that must attend the measures commenced while I was in England had been attended to, and the horrid mischief of this abominable war been thereby prevented. I should still be happy in any successful endeavors for restoring peace, consistent with the liberties, the safety, and the honor of America. As to our submitting to the Government of Great Britain, it is vain to think of it. She has given us, by her numberless barbarities, (by her malice in bribing slaves to murder their masters, and savages to massacre the families of farmers, with her baseness in rewarding the unfaithfulness of servants, and debauching the virtue of honest seamen, entrusted with our property,) in the prosecution of the war, and in the treatment of the prisoners, so deep an impression of her depravity, that we never again can trust her in the management of our affairs and interests. It is now impossible to persuade our people, as I long endeavored, that the war was merely Ministerial, and that the nation bore still a good will

to us. The infinite number of addresses printed in your gazettes, all approving the conduct of your Government towards us, and encouraging our destruction by every possible means; the great majority in Parliament constantly manifesting the same sentiments, and the popular public rejoicings on occasion of any news of the slaughter of an innocent and virtuous people, fighting only in defence of their just rights; these, together with the recommendations of the same measures by even your celebrated moralists and divines, in their writings and sermons, that are still approved and applauded in your great national assemblies, all join in convincing us that you are no longer the magnanimous enlightened nation we once esteemed you, and that you are unfit and unworthy to govern us, as not being able to govern your own passions.

But, as I have said, I should be nevertheless happy in seeing peace restored. For though if my friends and the friends of liberty and virtue who still remain in England, could be drawn out of it, a continuance of this war to the ruin of the rest would give me less concern, I cannot, as that removal is impossible, but wish for peace for their sakes, as well as for the sake of humanity, and preventing further carnage.

This wish of mine, ineffectual as it may be, induces me to mention to you, that between nations long exasperated against each other in war, some act of generosity and kindness towards prisoners on one side has softened resentment and abated animosity on the other, so as to bring on an accommodation. You in England, if you wish for peace, have, at present, the opportunity of trying this means with regard to the prisoners now in your gaols. They complain of very severe treatment. They are far from their friends and families; and winter is coming on, in which they must suffer extremely, if continued in their present situation; fed scantily on bad provisions, without warm lodgings, clothes, or fire, and not suffered to invite or receive visits from their friends, or even from the humane and charitable of their enemies.

I can assure you, from my own certain knowledge, that your people, prisoners in America, have been treated with great kindness. They have been served with the same rations of wholesome provisions with our own troops; comfortable lodgings have been provided for them, and they have been allowed large bounds of villages in the healthy air to walk and amuse themselves with on

their parole. Where you have thought fit to employ contractors to supply your people, these contractors have been protected and aided in their operations. Some considerable act of kindness towards our people would take off the reproach of inhumanity in that respect from the nation, and leave it where it ought with more certainty to lay—on the conductors of your war in America. This I hint to you, out of some remaining good will to a nation I once loved sincerely. But as things are, and in my present temper of mind, not being over fond of receiving obligations, I shall content myself with proposing, that your Government would allow us to send or employ a commissary to take some care of those unfortunate people. Perhaps on your representations this might speedily be obtained in England, though it was refused most inhumanly at New York. If you could have leisure to visit the gaols in which they are confined, and should be desirous of knowing the truth relative to the treatment they receive, I wish you would take the trouble of distributing among the most necessitous, according to their wants, five or six hundred pounds, for which your drafts on me here shall be punctually honored. You could then be able to speak with some certainty to the point in Parliament, and this might be attended with good effects.

If you cannot obtain for us permission to send a commissary, possibly you may find a trusty, humane, discreet person at Plymouth, and another at Portsmouth, who would undertake to communicate what relief we may be able to afford those unfortunate men—martyrs to the cause of liberty. Your King will not reward you for taking this trouble, but God will. I shall not mention the gratitude of America; you will have what is better—the applause of your own good conscience. Our captains have set at liberty above two hundred of your people, made prisoners by our armed vessels, and brought into France, besides a great number dismissed at sea on your coasts, to whom vessels were given to carry them in. But you have not returned us a man in exchange. If we had sold your people to the Moors at Sallee, as you have many of ours to the African and East India Companies, could you have complained?

In revising what I have written, I found too much warmth in it, and was about to strike out some parts. Yet I let them go, as they will afford you this one reflection: “If a man, naturally cool, and rendered still cooler by old age, is so warmed by our treatment of

his country, how much must those people in general be exasperated against us? And why are we making inveterate enemies by our barbarity, not only of the present inhabitants of a great country, but of their infinitely more numerous posterity, who will, in future ages, detest the name of *Englishman*, as much as the children in Holland now do those of *Alva* and *Spaniard*." This will certainly happen, unless your conduct is speedily changed, and the national resentment falls where it ought to fall heavily—on your Ministry, or perhaps rather on the King, whose will they only execute.

With the greatest esteem and affection, and best wishes for your prosperity, I have the honor to be, dear sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO JAMES LOVELL.

Paris, December 21st, 1777.

Sir,

I see in a vote of Congress, shown me by Captain Franval, that Dr. Deane is disowned in some of his agreements with officers. I, who am upon the spot, and know the infinite difficulty of resisting the powerful solicitations of great men, who if disobliged, might have it in their power to obstruct the supplies he was then obtaining, do not wonder that, being then a stranger to the people, and unacquainted with the language, he was at first prevailed on to make some such agreements, when all were recommended, as they always are, as *officiers expérimentés, braves comme leurs épées, pleins de courage, des talents, et de zèle, pour notre cause, &c., &c.*, in short, mere Cæsars, each of whom would have been an invaluable acquisition to America. You can have no conception how we are still besieged and worried on this head, our time cut to pieces by personal applications, besides those contained in dozens of letters by every post, which are so generally refused, that scarce one in a hundred obtains from us a simple recommendation to civilities.

I hope, therefore, that favorable allowance will be made to my worthy colleague, on account of his situation at the time, as he has long since corrected that mistake, and daily approves himself to my certain knowledge an able, faithful, active, and extremely useful servant of the public; a testimony I think it my duty to take this occasion of giving to his merit, unasked, as considering my great age

I may probably not live to give it personally in Congress, and I perceive he has enemies.

You will see the general news in the papers in particular; I can only say at present that our affairs go well here; and that I am with much respect, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.\*

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TO JAMES HUTTON. †

Passy, February 1st, 1778.

My dear old friend,

You desired that if I had no proposition to make, I would at least give my advice.

I think it is Ariosto who says, that all things lost on earth are to be found in the moon; on which somebody remarked, that there must be a great deal of good advice in the moon. If so, there is a good deal of mine formerly given and lost in this business. I will, however, at your request, give a little more; but without the least expectation that it will be followed; for none but God can at the same time give good counsel and wisdom to make use of it.

You have lost by this mad war, and the barbarity with which it has been carried on, not only the Government and commerce of America, and the public revenues and private wealth arising from that commerce; but what is more, you have lost the esteem, respect, friendship, and affection, of all that great and growing people, who consider you at present, and whose posterity will consider you, as the worst and wickedest nation upon earth. A peace you may undoubtedly obtain by dropping all your pretensions to govern us; and by your superior skill in huckstering negotiations, you may possibly make such an apparently advantageous bargain, as shall be applauded in your Parliament; but if you cannot with

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\* A letter from Dr. Franklin to the President of Congress, respecting Mr. Deane, dated March 31st, 1778, will be found in Mr. Deane's Correspondence, Vol. 1., p. 89.

† This gentleman was for many years Secretary to the Society of Moravians, and sustained a very estimable character. He seems to have gone to Paris on some private agency with reference to a peace. An intimate friendship subsisted between him and Dr. Franklin. He died in England, on the 25th of April, 1795, in his 80th year.

the peace recover the affections of that people, it will not be a lasting nor a profitable one, nor will it afford you any part of that strength which you once had by your union with them, and might (if you had been wise enough to take advice) have still retained.

To recover their respect and affection, you must tread back the steps you have taken.

Instead of honoring and rewarding the American advisers and promoters of this war, you should disgrace them, with all those who have inflamed the nation against America by their malicious writings; and all the Ministers and Generals who have prosecuted the war with such inhumanity. This would show a national change of disposition, and a disapprobation of what had passed.

In proposing terms you should not only grant such as the necessity of your affairs may evidently oblige you to grant, but such additional ones as may show your generosity, and thereby demonstrate your good will. For instance, perhaps you might by your treaty retain all Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas; but if you would have a real friendly as well as able ally in America, and avoid all occasion of future discord, which will otherwise be continually arising on your American frontiers, you should throw in those countries. And you may call it, if you please, an indemnification for the burning of their towns; which indemnification will otherwise be some time or other demanded.

I know your people will not see the utility of such measures, and will never follow them, and even call it insolence and impudence in me to mention them. I have, however, complied with your desire, and am, as ever, your affectionate friend,

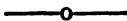
B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *February 12th, 1778.* I wrote the above some time before I received yours, acquainting me with your speedy and safe return, which gave me pleasure. I doubted after I had written it, whether it would be well to send it; for as your proud nation despises us exceedingly, and demands and expects absolute and humble submission, all talk of treaty must appear imprudence, and tend to provoke rather than conciliate. As you still press me by your last to say something, I conclude to send what I had written, for I think the advice is good, though it must be useless; and I cannot, as some amongst you desire, make propositions, having none committed to me to make; but we can treat if any are made to us; which,

however, we do not expect. I abominate with you all murder; and I may add, that the slaughter of men in an unjust cause is nothing less than murder; I therefore never think of your present Ministers and their abettors, but with the image strongly painted in my view, of their hands red, wet, and dropping with the blood of my countrymen, friends, and relations. No peace can be signed by those hands.

Peace and friendship will, nevertheless, subsist for ever between Mr. Hutton and his affectionate friend,

B. F.



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, February 12th, 1778.

Dear Sir,

A thousand thanks for your so readily engaging in the means of relieving our poor captives, and the pains you have taken, and the advances you have made for that purpose. I received your kind letter of the 3d instant, and send you enclosed a bill of one hundred pounds. I much approve of Mr. Wren's prudent, as well as benevolent conduct in the disposition of the money, and wish him to continue doing what shall appear to him and to you to be right, which I am persuaded will appear the same to me and my colleagues here. I beg you will present him, when you write, my respectful acknowledgments.

Your "earnest caution and request, that nothing may ever persuade America to throw themselves into the arms of France, for that times may mend, and that an American must always be a stranger in France, but that Great Britain may for ages to come be their home," marks the goodness of your heart, your regard for us, and love of your country. But when your nation is hiring all the cut-throats it can collect, of all countries and colors, to destroy us, it is hard to persuade us not to ask or accept aid from any Power that may be prevailed with to grant it; and this only from the hope, that though you now thirst for our blood, and pursue us with fire and sword, you may in some future time treat us kindly. This is too much patience to be expected of us; indeed, I think it is not in human nature.

The Americans are received and treated here in France with a

cordiality, a respect, and affection they never experienced in England when they most deserved it; and which is now (after all the pains taken to exasperate the English against them, and render them odious as well as contemptible) less to be expected there than ever. And I cannot see why we may not, upon an alliance, hope for a continuance of it, at least as much as the Swiss enjoy, with whom France have maintained a faithful friendship for two hundred years past, and whose people appear to live here in as much esteem as the natives. America has been *forced* and *driven* into the arms of France. She was a dutiful and virtuous daughter. A cruel mother-in-law turned her out of doors, defamed her, and sought her life. All the world knows her innocence, and takes her part; and her friends hope soon to see her honorably married. They can never persuade her return and submission to so barbarous an enemy. In her future prosperity, if she forgets and forgives, it is all that can be reasonably expected of her. I believe she will make as good and useful a wife as she did a daughter, that her husband will love and honor her, and that the family from which she was so wickedly expelled, will long regret the loss of her.

I know not whether a peace with us is desired in England; I rather think it is not at present, unless on the old impossible terms of submission and receiving pardon. Whenever you shall be disposed to make peace upon equal and reasonable terms, you will find little difficulty, if you get first an honest Ministry. The present have all along acted so deceitfully and treacherously, as well as inhumanly, towards the Americans, that I imagine that the absolute want of all confidence in them will make a treaty, at present, between them and the Congress, impracticable.

The subscription for the prisoners will have excellent effects in favor of England and Englishmen. The Scotch subscriptions for raising troops to destroy us, though amounting to much greater sums, will not do their nation half so much good. If you have an opportunity, I wish you would express our respectful acknowledgments and thanks to your committee and contributors, whose benefactions will make our poor people as comfortable as their situation can permit. Adieu, my dear friend. Accept my thanks for the excellent papers you enclosed to me. Your endeavors for peace, though unsuccessful, will always be a comfort to you, and in time

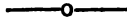


when this mad war shall be universally execrated, will be a solid addition to your reputation.

I am ever, with the highest esteem, &c., . B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. An old friend of mine, Mr. Hutton, a chief of the Moravians, who is often at the Queen's palace, and is sometimes spoken to by the King, was over here lately. He pretended to no commission, but urged me much to propose some terms of peace, which I avoided. He has written to me since his return, pressing the same thing, and expressing with some confidence his opinion that we might have every thing short of absolute independence, &c. Enclosed I send my answers open, that you may read them, and, if you please, copy, before you deliver or forward them. They will serve to show you more fully my sentiments, though they serve no other purpose.

B. F.



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, February 26th, 1778.

Dear Sir,

I received yours of the 18th and 20th of this month, with Lord North's proposed bills. The more I see of the ideas and projects of your Ministry, and their little arts and schemes of amusing and dividing us, the more I admire the prudent, manly, and magnanimous propositions contained in your intended motion for an address to the King. What reliance can we have on an act expressing itself to be only a declaration of the *intention* of Parliament, concerning the *exercise* of the right of imposing taxes in America, when in the bill itself, as well as in the title, a right is supposed and claimed which never existed; and a *present intention* only is declared not to use it, which may be changed by another act next session, with a preamble, that this *intention* being found expedient, it is thought proper to repeal this act, and resume the exercise of *the right* in its full extent. If any solid permanent benefit was intended by this, why is it confined to the Colonies of North America, and not extended to the loyal ones in the sugar islands? But it is now needless to criticise, as all acts that suppose your future government of the Colonies can be no longer significant.

In the act for appointing Commissioners, instead of full powers to agree upon terms of peace and friendship, with a promise of ratifying such treaty as they shall make in pursuance of those powers, it is declared that their agreements shall have no force nor effect, nor be carried into execution, till approved of by Parliament; so that every thing of importance will be uncertain. But they are allowed to proclaim a cessation of arms, and revoke their proclamation, as soon as, in consequence of it, our militia have been allowed to go home; they may suspend the operation of acts prohibiting trade, and take off that suspension when our merchants, in consequence of it, have been induced to send their ships to sea; in short, they may do every thing that can have a tendency to divide and distract us, but nothing that can afford us security. Indeed, sir, your Ministers do not know us. We may not be quite so cunning as they, but we have really more sense, as well as more courage, than they have ever been willing to give us credit for; and I am persuaded these acts will rather obstruct peace than promote it, and that they will not answer in America the mischievous and malevolent ends for which they were intended. In England they may indeed amuse the public creditors, give hopes and expectations that shall be of some present use, and continue the mismanagers a little longer in their places.

*Voilà tout!*

In return for your repeated advice to us not to conclude any treaty with the House of Bourbon, permit me to give (through you) a little advice to the Whigs in England. Let nothing induce them to join with the Tories in supporting and continuing this wicked war against the Whigs of America, whose assistance they may hereafter want to secure their own liberties, or whose country they may be glad to retire to for the enjoyment of them.

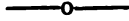
If peace, by a treaty with America upon equal terms, were really desired, your Commissioners need not go there for it; supposing, as by the bill they are empowered "to treat with such person or persons as in their wisdom and discretion they shall think meet," they should happen to conceive that the Commissioners of the Congress at Paris might be included in that description.

I am ever, dear sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Seriously, on further thoughts, I am of opinion, that if wise

and honest men, such as Sir George Saville, the Bishop of St. Asaph, and yourself, were to come over here immediately with powers to treat, you might not only obtain peace with America, but prevent a war with France.



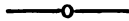
TO JAMES HUTTON.

Passy, March 24th, 1778.

My dear old friend was in the right not "to call in question the sincerity of my words, where I say, February the 12th, *we can treat if any propositions are made to us.*" They were true then, and are so still, if Britain has not declared war with France; for in that case we shall, undoubtedly, think ourselves obliged to continue the war as long as she does. But methinks you should have taken us at our word, and have sent immediately your propositions in order to prevent such a war, if you did not choose it. Still I conceive it would be well to do it, if you have not already rashly begun the war. Assure yourself, nobody more sincerely wishes perpetual peace among men than I do; but there is a prior wish, that they would be equitable and just; otherwise such peace is not possible, and, indeed, wicked men have no right to expect it.

Adieu! I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.



NOTE FROM WILLIAM PULTNEY TO B. FRANKLIN.\*

March 29th, 1778.

Mr. Williams returned this morning to Paris, and will be glad to see Dr. Franklin, whenever it is convenient for the Doctor, at the Hotel Frasiliere, rue Tournon. It is near the hotel where he lodged when the Doctor saw him a fortnight ago. He does not propose to go abroad, and therefore the Doctor will find him at any hour. He understands that Mr. Alexander is not yet returned from Dijon, which he regrets.

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\* Mr. Pultney writes under the assumed name of Williams.

TO WILLIAM PULTNEY.

Passy, March 30th, 1778.

Sir,

When I first had the honor of conversing with you on the subject of peace, I mentioned it as my opinion that every proposition which implied our voluntarily agreeing to return to a dependence on Britain, was now become impossible; that a peace on equal terms undoubtedly might be made; and that though we had no particular powers to treat of peace with England, we had general powers to make treaties of peace, amity, and commerce, with any State in Europe, by which I thought we might be authorised to treat with Britain; who, if sincerely disposed to peace, might save time, and much bloodshed, by treating with us directly.

I also gave it as my opinion that, in the treaty to be made, Britain should endeavor by the fairness and generosity of the terms she offered, to recover the esteem, confidence, and affection of America, without which the peace could not be so beneficial, as it was not likely to be lasting; in this I had the pleasure to find you of my opinion.

But I see by the propositions you have communicated to me, that the Ministers cannot yet divest themselves of the idea that the power of Parliament over us is constitutionally absolute and unlimited; and that the limitations they may be willing now to put to it by treaty are so many favors, or so many benefits, for which we are to make compensation.

As our opinions in America are totally different, a treaty on the terms proposed appears to me utterly impracticable, either here or there. Here we certainly cannot make it, having not the smallest authority to make even the declaration specified in the proposed letter, without which, if I understood you right, treating with us cannot be commenced.

I sincerely wish as much for peace as you do; and I have enough remaining of good will for England to wish it for her sake, as well as for our own, and for the sake of humanity. In the present state of things, the proper means of obtaining it, in my opinion, are to acknowledge the independence of the United States, and then enter at once into a treaty with us for a suspension of arms, with the usual provisions relating to distances; and another for establishing peace,

friendship, and commerce, such as France has made. This might prevent a war between you and that kingdom, which, in the present circumstances and temper of the two nations, an accident may bring on every day, though contrary to the interest, and without the previous intention of either. Such a treaty we might probably now make, with the approbation of our friends; but if you go to war with them, on account of their friendship for us, we are bound by ties stronger than can be formed by any treaty to fight against you with them, as long as the war against them shall continue.

May God, at last, grant that wisdom to your national councils which he seems long to have denied them, and which only sincere, just, and humane intentions can merit or expect.

With great personal esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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TO DR. BANCROFT.

Passy, April 16th, 1778.

Dear Sir,

I wish you would assure our friend that Dr. Franklin never gave any such expectations to Mr. Pultney. On the contrary, he told him that the Commissioners could not succeed in their mission, whether they went to recover the *dependence* or to *divide*. His opinion is confirmed by the enclosed resolves, which, perhaps, it may not be amiss to publish in England. Please to send me the newspaper.

Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

—○—

DAVID HARTLEY TO DR. FRANKLIN.

Paris, April 23d, 1778.

Dear Sir,

I will take care of all your commissions. This moment a second packet of infinite value is received, which I shall cherish as a mark of affection from you. I opened the letter by mistake which came with it, and soon saw it was not for me. I hope you will excuse it. I choose rather to throw myself upon your goodness for the excuse, than any thing else. I shall not set out till between one and two;

therefore, if you will be so good as to send me another copy, I will take care of it, and deliver it safely.

God bless you, my dear friend. No exertion or endeavor on my part shall be wanting that we may some time or other meet again in peace. Your powers are infinitely more influential than mine. To those powers I trust my last hopes. I will conclude, blessed are the peace makers.

Your affectionate friend,

D. HARTLEY.

P. S. If tempestuous times should come, take care of your own safety ; events are uncertain, and men may be capricious.

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ANSWER.

I thank you for your kind caution, but having nearly finished a long life, I set but little value on what remains of it. Like a draper, when one chaffers with him for a remnant, I am ready to say, "As it is only the fag end, I will not differ with you about it ; take it for what you please." Perhaps the best use such an old fellow can be put to, is to make a martyr of him.

B. FRANKLIN.

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TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, April 24th, 1778.

Sir,

Mr. Hartley, a member of Parliament, an old acquaintance of mine, arrived here from London on Sunday last. He is generally in the opposition, especially on American questions, but has some respect for Lord North. In conversation he expressed the strongest anxiety for peace with America, and appeared extremely desirous to know my sentiments of the terms which might probably be acceptable if offered ; whether America would not, to obtain peace, grant some superior advantages in trade to Britain, and enter into an alliance offensive and defensive ; whether, if war should be declared against France, we had obliged ourselves by treaty to join with her against England.

My answers have been, that the United States were not fond of war, and with the advice of their friends would probably be easily

prevailed with to make peace on equitable terms; but we had no terms committed to us to propose, and I did not choose to mention any; that Britain, having injured us heavily by making this unjust war upon us, might think herself well off, if, *on reparation of those injuries*, we admitted her to *equal* advantages with other nations in commerce; but certainly she had no reason to expect *superior*; that her known fondness for war, and the many instances of her readiness to engage in wars on frivolous occasions, were probably sufficient to cause an immediate rejection of every proposition for an *offensive* alliance with her; and that if she made war against France on our account, a peace with us, at the same time, was impossible; for that, having met with friendship from that generous nation, when we were cruelly oppressed by England, we were under ties stronger than treaties could form, to make common cause; which we should certainly do to the utmost of our power.

Here has also been with me a Mr. Chapman, who says he is a member of the Parliament of Ireland, on his way home from Nice, where he had been for the recovery of his health. He pretended to call on me only from motives of respect for my character, &c. But after a few compliments, he entered on a similar discourse, urging much to know what terms would satisfy America, and whether, on having *peace and independence granted* to us, we should not be willing to submit to the navigation act, or give equivalent privileges in trade to Britain. The purport of my answer to him was, in short, that peace was of equal value to England as to us, and independence we were already in possession of; that, therefore, England's offer to grant them to us could not be considered as proposing any favor, or as giving her a right to expect peculiar advantages in commerce. By his importunity, I found his visit was not so occasional as he represented it; and from some expressions I conjectured he might be sent by Lord Shelburne to sound me, and collect some information. On the whole, I gather from these conversations that the Opposition, as well as the Ministry, are perplexed with the present situation of affairs, and know not which way to turn themselves, whether it is best to go backward or forward, or what steps to take to extricate that nation from its present dangerous situation.

I thought it right to give your Excellency an account of these interviews, and to acquaint you with my intention of avoiding such

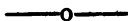
hereafter, as I see but little prospect of utility in them, and think they are very liable to hurtful misrepresentations.

By advices from London we learn that a fleet for Quebec, with goods valued at five hundred thousand pounds sterling, is to sail about the end of this month, under convoy only of a single frigate of thirty guns, in which is to go Governor Haldimand.

Enclosed I send a paper I have just received from London. It is not subscribed by any name, but I know the hand. It is from an old friend of general and great acquaintance, and marks strongly the present distress and despair of considerate people in England.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, your Excellency's, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, April 25th, 1778.

I have made known to the King, sir, the substance of the letter which you did me the honor of writing to me yesterday; and I am directed by his Majesty to express to you the satisfaction he has experienced from the information which you have communicated on your conferences with Mr. Hartley. The grand principle of the English policy has always been to excite divisions, and it is by such means she expects to sustain her empire; but it is not upon you, nor upon your colleagues, that she can practise such arts with success. I entertain the same sentiments of confidence in the United States. As to the rest, it is impossible to speak with more dignity, frankness, and firmness, than you have done to Mr. Hartley; he has no reason to be very well satisfied with his mission. I doubt whether this member of Parliament has any mission for us; but he desires to see me, and I expect him in the course of the morning. I should not be at all surprised if his purpose be to sow distrust between us, by proposing a double negociation. That I can obviate; but whatever passes between us, however trifling it may be, you shall be made acquainted with.

I have the honor to be, with the most perfect consideration, sir, your most humble and most obedient servant,

DE VERGENNES.



## JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Yorktown, June 20th, 1778.

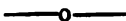
Sir,

By a most unlucky mistake I did not forward the resolve of the 5th of May, with the ratifications of the treaties sent in that month, in the packets A B C, but I have sent it in D E *via* Martinique, and now forward it *via* Boston in F G, not allowing myself to wa it for the concurrence of the Committee in a joint letter.

Our troops were in the city of Philadelphia on the morning of the 18th. The intentions of the enemy in evacuating it cannot yet be explained. Our army is in motion and will press them. The gazettes contain every thing material. By the arrival of Messrs. Simeon Deane, May 2d, Courter, May 18th, Stevenson, June 10th, Holker and Carmichael, June 18th, we have the favors of yourself and other friends in continuance. Commissioners will be particularly nominated to transact affairs for us at Lisbon and the Hague, if those Courts are well disposed towards us. We are now growing anxious about our worthy friend, J. Adams.

Your most humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL,

*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*

## ANSWER TO A LETTER FROM BRUSSELS.

Passy, July 1st, 1778.

Sir,

I received your letter, dated at Brussels, the 16th past.

My vanity might possibly be flattered by your expressions of compliment to my understanding, if your proposals did not more clearly manifest a mean opinion of it.

You conjure me in the name of the omniscient and just God, before whom I must appear, and by my hopes of future fame, to consider if some expedient cannot be found to put a stop to the desolation of America, and prevent the miseries of a general war. As I am conscious of having taken every step in my power to prevent the breach, and no one to widen it, I can appear cheerfully before that God, fearing nothing from his justice in this particular, though I have much occasion for his mercy in many others. As to

my future fame, I am content to rest it on my past and present conduct, without seeking an addition to it in the crooked, dark paths you propose to me, where I should most certainly lose it. This, your solemn address, would therefore have been more properly made to your Sovereign and his venal Parliament. He and they, who wickedly began, and madly continue, a war for the desolation of America, are alone accountable for the consequences.

You endeavor to impress me with a bad opinion of French faith ; but the instances of their friendly endeavors to serve a race of weak princes, who, by their own imprudence, defeated every attempt to promote their interest, weigh but little with me when I consider the steady friendship of France to the thirteen United States of Switzerland, which has now continued inviolate two hundred years. You tell me that she will certainly cheat us, and that she despises us already. I do not believe that she will cheat us, and I am not certain that she despises us ; but I see clearly that you are endeavoring to cheat us by your conciliatory bills ; that you actually despised our understandings when you flattered yourselves those artifices would succeed ; and that not only France, but all Europe, yourselves included, most certainly and for ever would despise us if we were weak enough to accept your insidious propositions.

Our expectations of the future grandeur of America are not so magnificent, and therefore not so vain or visionary, as you represent them to be. The body of our people are not merchants, but humble husbandmen, who delight in the cultivation of their lands, which, from their fertility and the variety of our climates, are capable of furnishing all the necessaries and conveniences of life without external commerce ; and we have too much land to have the least temptation to extend our territory by conquest from peaceable neighbors, as well as too much justice to think of it. Our militia, you find by experience, are sufficient to defend our lands from invasion ; and the commerce with us will be defended by all the nations who find an advantage in it. We, therefore, have not the occasion you imagine, of fleets or standing armies, but may leave those expensive machines to be maintained for the pomp of princes, and the wealth of ancient States. We propose, if possible, to live in peace with all mankind ; and after you have been convinced to your cost, that there is nothing to be got by attacking us, we have reason to hope that no other Power will judge it prudent to quarrel with us, lest they divert us from

our own quiet industry, and turn us into corsairs preying upon theirs. The weight, therefore, of an independent empire, which you seem certain of our inability to bear, will not be so great as you imagine. The expense of our civil Government we have always borne, and can easily bear, because it is small. A virtuous and laborious people may be cheaply governed. Determining as we do, to have no offices of profit, nor any sinecures or useless appointments, so common in ancient or corrupted States, we can govern ourselves a year, for the sum you pay in a single department, or for what one jobbing contractor, by the favor of a Minister, can cheat you out of in a single article.

You think we flatter ourselves, and are deceived into an opinion that England *must* acknowledge our independency. We, on the other hand, think you flatter yourselves in imagining such an acknowledgment a vast boon, which we strongly desire, and which you may gain some great advantage by granting or withholding. We have never asked it of you; we only tell you, that you can have no treaty with us but as an independent State; and you may please yourselves and your children with the rattle of your right to govern us, as long as you have done with that of your King's being King of France, without giving us the least concern, if you do not attempt to exercise it. That this pretended right is indisputable, as you say, we utterly deny. Your Parliament never had a right to govern us, and your King has forfeited it by his bloody tyranny. But I thank you for letting me know a little of your mind, that even if the Parliament should acknowledge our independency, the act would not be binding to posterity, and that your nation would resume and prosecute the claim as soon as they found it convenient from the influence of your passions, and your present malice against us. We suspected before, that you would not be actually bound by your conciliatory acts, longer than till they had served their purpose of inducing us to disband our forces; but we were not certain that you were knaves by principle, and that we ought not to have the least confidence in your offers, promises, or treaties, though confirmed by Parliament.

I now, indeed, recollect my being informed long since, when in England, that a certain very great personage, then young, studied much a certain book entitled *Arcana imperii*. I had the curiosity to procure the book and read it. There are sensible and good things

in it, but some bad ones; for, if I remember rightly, a particular King is applauded for his politically exciting a rebellion among his subjects, at a time when they had not strength to support it, that he might, in subduing them, take away their privileges, which were troublesome to him; and a question is formally stated and discussed, *Whether a Prince, who, to appease a revolt, makes promises of indemnity to the revolters, is obliged to fulfil those promises?* Honest and good men would say, ay; but this politician says, as you say, no. And he gives this pretty reason, that though it was right to make the promises, because otherwise the revolt would not be suppressed, yet it would be wrong to keep them, because revolters ought to be punished to deter future revolts.

If these are the principles of your nation, no confidence can be placed in you; it is in vain to treat with you, and the wars can only end in being reduced to an utter inability of continuing them.

One main drift of your letter seems to be to impress me with an idea of your own impartiality, by just censures of your Ministers and measures, and to draw from me propositions of peace, or approbations of those you have enclosed to me, which you intimate may by your means be conveyed to the King directly, without the intervention of those Ministers. You would have me give them to, or drop them for, a stranger whom I may find next Monday in the church of Notre Dame, to be known by a rose in his hat. You yourself, sir, are quite unknown to me; you have not trusted me with your true name. Our taking the least step towards a treaty with England through you, might, if you are an enemy, be made use of to ruin us with our new and good friends. I may be indiscreet enough in many things; but certainly, if I were disposed to make propositions (which I cannot do, having none committed to me to make) I should never think of delivering them to the Lord knows who, to be carried to the Lord knows where, to serve no one knows what purposes. Being at this time one of the most remarkable figures in Paris, even my appearance in the church of Notre Dame, where I cannot have any conceivable business, and especially being seen to leave or drop any letter to any person there, would be a matter of some speculation, and might, from the suspicions it must naturally give, have very mischievous consequences to our credit here. The very proposing of a correspondence so to be managed, in a manner not necessary where fair dealing is intended, gives just

reason to suppose you intend the contrary. Besides, as your Court has sent Commissioners to treat with the Congress, with all the powers that would be given them by the Crown under the act of Parliament, what good purpose can be served by privately obtaining propositions from us? Before those Commissioners went, we might have treated in virtue of our general powers, (with the knowledge, advice, and approbation of our friends,) upon any propositions made to us. But under the present circumstances, for us to make propositions, while a treaty is supposed to be actually on foot with the Congress, would be extremely improper, highly presumptuous with regard to our constituents, and answer no good end whatever.

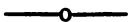
I write this letter to you notwithstanding, (which I think I can convey in a less mysterious manner, and guess it may come to your hands;) I write it because I would let you know our sense of your procedure, which appears as insidious as that of your conciliatory bills. Your true way to obtain peace, if your Ministers desire it, is to propose openly to the Congress fair and equal terms, and you may possibly come sooner to such a resolution when you find that personal flatteries, general cajolings, and panegyrics on our *virtue* and *wisdom* are not likely to have the effect you seem to expect; the persuading us to act basely and foolishly in betraying our country and posterity into the hands of our most bitter enemies, giving up or selling of our arms and warlike stores, dismissing our ships of war and troops, and putting those enemies in possession of our forts and ports.

This proposition of delivering ourselves bound and gagged, ready for hanging, without even a right to complain, and without a friend to be found afterwards among all mankind, you would have us embrace upon the faith of an act of Parliament! Good God! an act of your Parliament! This demonstrates that you do not yet know us, and that you fancy we do not know you; but it is not merely this flimsy faith that we are to act upon; you offer us *hope*, the hope of **PLACES**, **PENSIONS**, and **PEERAGES**. These, judging from yourselves, you think are motives irresistible. This offer to corrupt us, sir, is with me your credential, and convinces me that you are not a private volunteer in your application. It bears the stamp of British court character. It is even the signature of your King. But think for a moment in what light it must be viewed in America. By **PLACES**, you mean places among us; for you take care, by a special

article, to secure your own to yourselves. We must then pay the salaries in order to enrich ourselves with these places. But you will give us PENSIONS, probably to be paid, too, out of your expected American revenue, and which none of us can accept without deserving, and perhaps obtaining, a *sus-pension*. PEERAGES! Alas! sir, our long observation of the vast servile majority of your peers, voting constantly for every measure proposed by a Minister, however weak or wicked, leaves us small respect for that title. We consider it as a sort of *tar-and-feather* honor, or a mixture of foulness and folly, which every man among us, who should accept it from your King, would be obliged to renounce, or exchange for that conferred by the mobs of their own country, or wear it with everlasting infamy.

I am, sir, your humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, July 22d, 1778.

Sir,

I received your favor of May 15th, and was glad to find that mine of December 25th had come to hand. Mr. Deane's brother writes it was not signed, which was an accidental omission. Mr. Deane is himself, I hope, with you long before this time, and I doubt not every prejudice against him is removed. It was not alone upon the proceedings of Congress that I formed my opinion that such prejudices existed. I am glad to understand that opinion was groundless, and that he is likely to come back with honor in the Commission to Holland, where matters are already so ripe for his operations that he cannot fail (with his abilities) of being useful.

You mention former letters of the Committee, by which we might have seen the apprehensions of the resentment of foreign officers, &c. Those letters never came to hand. And we, on our part, are amazed to hear that the Committee had had no line from us for near a year, during which we had written, I believe, five or six long and particular letters, and had made it a rule to send triplicates of each, and to replace those that we happened to hear were lost, so that of some there were five copies sent; and as I hear that Captain Young is arrived, who had some of them, I think it probable that one of

each, at least, must have come to your hands before this time. Mr. Deane's information, however, may supply the want of them, whose arrival, as he went with a strong squadron of men of war, is more likely than that of this vessel, or any other single one by which we might send more copies.

The affair with M. de Beaumarchais will be best settled by his assistance after his return. We find it recommended to us, but we know too little of it to be able to do it well without him.

There has been some inaccuracy in sending us the last despatches of the Committee. Two copies of the contract with M. Francy and the invoices came by the same vessel, Captain Niles. And though one of your letters mentions sending enclosed a resolution of Congress relative to two articles of the treaty, that resolution is not come to hand. There are circumstances in the affair of those articles that make them in my opinion, of no consequence if they stand, while the proposing to abrogate them has an unpleasing appearance, as it looks like a desire of having it in our power to make that commercial kind of war which no honest State can begin, which no good friend or neighbor ever did or will begin, which has always been considered as an act of hostility that provoked, as well as justified, reprisals, and has generally produced such as rendered the first project as unprofitable as it was unjust. Commerce among nations, as well as between private persons, should be fair and equitable, by equivalent exchanges and mutual supplies. The taking unfair advantage of a neighbor's necessities, though attended with temporary success, always breeds bad blood. To lay duties on a commodity exported, which our neighbors want, is a knavish attempt to get something for nothing. The statesman who first invented it had the genius of a pickpocket, and would have been a pickpocket if fortune had suitably placed him. The nations who have practised it have suffered fourfold, as pickpockets ought to suffer. Savoy, by a duty on exported wines, lost the trade of Switzerland, which thenceforth raised its own wine; and (to waive other instances) Britain, by her duty on exported tea, has lost the trade of her Colonies. But as we produce no commodity that is peculiar to our country, and which may not be obtained elsewhere, the discouraging the consumption of ours by duties on exportation, and thereby encouraging a rivalry from other nations in the ports we trade to, is absolute folly, which, indeed, is mixed more or less with all

knavery. For my own part, if my protest were of any consequence, I should protest against our ever doing it, even by way of reprisal. It is a meanness with which I would not dirty the conscience or character of my country.

The objections stated against the last of the two articles had all been made and considered here; and were sent, I imagine, from hence by one who is offended, that they were not thought of weight sufficient to stop the signing of the treaty till the King should, in another council, reconsider those articles; and after agreeing to omit them, order new copies to be drawn, though all was then ready engrossed on parchment as before settled. I did not think the articles of much consequence; but I thought it of consequence that no delay should be given to the signing of the treaty after it was ready. But if I had known that those objections would have been sent to the Committee, I should have sent the answers they received, which had been satisfactory to *all* the Commissioners when the treaty was settled, and until the mind of one\* of them was altered by the opinion of two other persons.† It is now too late to send those answers. But I wish for the future, if such a case should again happen, that Congress would acquaint their Commissioners with such partial objections, and hear their reasons before they determine that they have done wrong. In the mean time this only to you in private; it will be of no use to communicate it, as the resolutions of Congress will probably be received and executed before this letter comes to hand.

Speaking of Commissioners in the plural, puts me in mind of inquiring if it can be the intention of Congress to keep *three* Commissioners at this Court; we have indeed four with the gentleman intended for Tuscany, who continues here, and is very angry that he was not consulted in making the treaty, which he could have mended in several particulars; and perhaps he is angry with some reason, if the instructions to him do, as he says they do, require us to consult him. We shall soon have a fifth, for the envoy to Vienna not being received there, is, I hear, returning hither. The necessary expense

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\* Arthur Lee. See his Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 470.

† Ralph Izard and William Lee. See Mr. Izard's Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 650, 651.



of maintaining us all, is, I assure you, enormously great. I wish that the utility may equal it. I imagine every one of us spends nearly as much as Lord Stormont did. It is true he left behind him the character of a niggard; and when the advertisement appeared for the sale of his household goods, all Paris laughed at an article of it, perhaps very innocently expressed, "*Une grande quantité du linge de table, qui n'a jamais servi.*" "*Cela est tres vraisemblable,*" say they, "*car il n'a jamais donné à manger.*" But as to our number, whatever advantage there might be in the joint counsels of three for framing and adjusting the articles of the treaty, there can be none in managing the common business of a resident here. On the contrary, all the advantages in negotiation that result from secrecy of sentiment, and uniformity in expressing it, and in common business from despatch, are lost. In a Court, too, where every word is watched and weighed, if a number of Commissioners do not every one hold the same language, in giving their opinion on any public transaction, this lessens their weight; and when it may be prudent to put on, or avoid certain appearances of concern, for example, or indifference, satisfaction, or dislike, where the utmost sincerity and candor should be used, and would gain credit, if no semblance of art showed itself in the inadvertent discourse, perhaps of only one of them, the hazard is in proportion to the number. And where every one must be consulted on every particular of common business, in answering every letter, &c., and one of them is offended if the smallest thing is done without his consent, the difficulty of being often and long enough together, the different opinions, and the time consumed in debating them, the interruptions by new applicants in the time of meeting, &c., &c., occasion so much postponing and delay, that correspondence languishes, occasions are lost, and the business is always behindhand.

I have mentioned the difficulty of being often and long enough together; this is considerable, where they cannot all be accommodated in the same house; but to find three people whose tempers are so good, and who like so well one another's company and manner of living and conversing, as to agree well themselves, though being in one house, and whose servants will not by their indiscretion quarrel with one another, and by artful misrepresentations draw their masters in to take their parts, to the disturbance

of necessary harmony, these are difficulties still greater and almost insurmountable; and, in consideration of the whole, I wish Congress would separate us.

The Spanish galliots, which have been patiently expected, are at length happily arrived. The fleet and army returning from Brazil is still out, but supposed to be on her way homewards. When that and the South Sea ships are arrived it will appear whether Spain's accession to the treaty has been delayed for the reasons given, or whether the reasons were only given to excuse the delay.

The English and French fleets of nearly equal force are now both at sea. It is not doubted but that if they meet there will be a battle, for though England through fear affects to understand it to be still peace, and would excuse the depredations she has made on the commerce of France by pretences of illicit trade, &c., yet France considers the war begun from the time of the King's message to Parliament complaining of the insult France had given by treating with us and demanding aids to resist it, and the answer of both Houses offering their lives and fortunes; and the taking several frigates are deemed indisputable hostilities. Accordingly, orders are given to all the fleets and armed ships to return hostilities, and encouragement is offered to privateers, &c. An Ambassador from Spain is indeed gone to London, and joyfully received there, in the idea that peace may be made by his mediation; but as yet we learn nothing certain of his mission, and doubt his effecting any thing of the kind.

War in Germany seems to be inevitable, and this occasioning great borrowings of money in Holland and elsewhere by the Powers concerned, makes it more difficult for us to succeed in ours. When we engaged to Congress to pay their bills for the interest of the sums they should borrow, we did not dream of their drawing on us for other occasions. We have already paid of Congress' drafts, to returned officers, eighty-two thousand two hundred and eleven livres; and we know not how much more of that kind we have to pay, because the committee have never let us know the amount of those drafts, or their account of them never reached us, and they still continue coming in. And we are now surprised with advice of drafts from Mr. Bingham to the amount of one hundred thousand more. If you reduce us to bankruptcy here, by a non-payment of your drafts, consider the consequences. In my humble opinion no

drafts should be made on us without first learning from us that we shall be able to answer them.

M. de Beaumarchais has been out of town ever since the arrival of your power to settle with him. I hope he will be able to furnish the supplies mentioned in the invoice and contract. The settlement may be much better made with the assistance of Mr. Deane, we being not privy to the transaction.

We have agreed to give Monsieur Dumas two hundred louis a year, thinking that he well deserves it.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



INSTRUCTIONS TO B. FRANKLIN, AS MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY TO  
THE COURT OF FRANCE.

We, the Congress of the United States of North America, having thought it proper to appoint you their Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of his Most Christian Majesty, you shall in all things, according to the best of your knowledge and abilities, promote the interest and honor of the said States at that Court, with a particular attention to the following instructions.

1. You are immediately to assure his Most Christian Majesty that these States entertain the highest sense of his exertions in their favor, particularly by sending the respectable squadron under the Count d'Estaing, which would probably have terminated the war in a speedy and honorable manner, if unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances had not intervened.

You are further to assure him that they consider this speedy aid not only as a testimony of his Majesty's fidelity to the engagements he has entered into, but as an earnest of that protection which they hope from his power and magnanimity, and as a bond of gratitude to the union, founded on mutual interest.

2. You shall, by the earliest opportunity, and on every necessary occasion, assure the King and his Ministers that neither the Congress nor any of the States they represent, have at all swerved from their determination to be independent, made in July, 1776. But as the declaration was made in the face of the most powerful fleet and army which could have been expected to operate against them, and

without any the slightest assurance of foreign aid, so, although in a defenceless situation, and harassed by the secret machinations and designs of intestine foes, they have, under the exertions of that force during those bloody campaigns, persevered in their determination to be free. And that they have been inflexible in this determination, notwithstanding the interruption of their commerce, the great sufferings they have experienced from the want of those things which it procured, and the unexampled barbarity of their enemies.

3. You are to give the most pointed and positive assurances that although the Congress are earnestly desirous of peace, as well to arrange their finances and recruit the exhausted state of their country as to spare the further effusion of blood, yet they will faithfully perform their engagements, and afford every assistance in their power to prosecute the war for the great purposes of the alliance.

4. You shall endeavor to obtain the King's consent to expunge from the treaty of commerce the eleventh and twelfth articles, as inconsistent with that equality and reciprocity which form the best security to perpetuate the whole.

5. You are to exert yourself to procure the consent of the Court of France, that all American seamen who may be taken on board of British vessels, may, if they choose, be permitted to enter on board of American vessels. In return for which you are authorised to stipulate that all Frenchmen who may be taken on board of British vessels, by vessels belonging to the United States, shall be delivered up to persons appointed for that purpose by his Most Christian Majesty.

6. You are to suggest to the Ministers of his Most Christian Majesty the advantage that would result from entering on board the ships of these States, British seamen who may be made prisoners, thereby impairing the force of the enemy, and strengthening the hands of his ally.

7. You are also to suggest the fatal consequences, which would follow to the commerce of the common enemy, if, by confining the war to the European and Asiatic seas, the coasts of America could be so far freed from the British fleets, as to furnish a safe asylum to the frigates and privateers of the allied nations and their prizes.

8. You shall constantly inculcate the certainty of ruining the British fisheries on the Banks of Newfoundland, and consequently

the British marine, by reducing Halifax and Quebec ; since, by that means they would be exposed to alarm and plunder, and deprived of the necessary supplies formerly drawn from America. The plan proposed to Congress for compassing these objects is herewith transmitted for your more particular instruction.\*

9. You are to lay before the Court the deranged state of our finances, together with the causes thereof ; and show the necessity of placing them on a more respectable footing, in order to prosecute the war with vigor on the part of America. Observations on that subject are herewith transmitted,† and more particular instructions shall be sent, whenever the necessary steps previous thereto shall have been taken.

10. You are, by every means in your power, to promote a perfect harmony, concord, and good understanding, not only between the allied Powers, but also between and among their subjects, that the connexion so favorably begun may be perpetuated.

11. You shall in all things take care not to make any engagements or stipulations on the part of America, without the consent of America previously obtained.

We pray God to further you with His goodness in the several objects hereby recommended ; and that He will have you in His holy keeping.

Done at Philadelphia, the 26th day of October, 1778.

By the Congress :

H. LAURENS, *President.*



COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, October 28th, 1778.

Sir,

As the Marquis de la Fayette will deliver this, we refer you to his conversation, in addition to the gazettes, for an account of the movements of the enemy. He will doubtless gain some further knowledge of them, than we are yet possessed of before he leaves Boston. We shall speedily have opportunities of forwarding dupli-

\* For a copy of this plan, see the *Secret Journals*, vol. 2, p. 111.

† See the *Secret Journals*, vol. 2, p. 118.

cates and triplicates of what he now carries; and upon any material event we shall despatch a vessel occasionally. Enclosed with other papers is a resolve of Congress of the 22d, which we have officially sent to all the Commissioners.

We must earnestly request that, as we shall have opportunities of frequently conveying to you gazettes and other species of intelligence, you would strive to communicate, in the speediest and best way, to the gentlemen at the other Courts, what they are alike interested to know, that they may prosecute in the best manner the service of these States abroad. An exact copy of your credentials is among the papers herewith sent.

We wish you success in your new commission, and are, with much regard, &c.,

R. H. LEE,  
JAMES LOVELL.



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Sir,

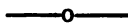
Philadelphia, December 8th, 1778.

By Mr. Cummins, on the 28th of last month, I forwarded several papers of importance, triplicates of which Mr. Bromfield, the bearer of this, will deliver. But an accident then took place, obliging me to hold back a letter which I had written to you. Time was wanting in which to write another, the vessel having fallen down to Reedy Island, and the express being mounted. My letter was chiefly on the circumstances of an intended plan of operations, which was enclosed, but detained for alterations to be made in Congress.

Our only important struggle now is with our currency. We shall be able at least to keep it from growing worse; but we want the aid of skilful financiers, and of moneyed men, to bring about any considerable appreciation, as you will more clearly perceive by one of the papers to be herewith delivered.

I am, sir, &c.,

JAMES LOVELL,  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*

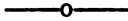


DR. PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, January 18th, 1779.

Doctor PRICE returns his best thanks to the Honorable Benjamin

Franklin, Arthur Lee, and John Adams, for conveying to him the resolution of Congress of the 6th of October last,\* by which he is invited to become a member of the United States, and to give his assistance in regulating their finances. It is not possible for him to express the sense he has of the honor which this resolution does him, and the satisfaction with which he reflects on the favorable opinion of him which has occasioned it. But he knows himself not to be sufficiently qualified for giving such assistance; and he is so connected in this country, and also advancing so fast in the evening of life, that he cannot think of a removal. He requests the favor of the honorable Commissioners to transmit this reply to Congress, with assurances that Dr. Price feels the warmest gratitude for the notice taken of him, and that he looks to the American States as *now* the hope, and likely *soon* to become the refuge of mankind.



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, January 29th, 1779.

Sir,

By the way of Martinique, I send you a large course of newspapers. In those of late date you will see, that the enemy are exerting their force but too successfully in Georgia. We hope the Count d'Estaing will be able to operate with us by a detachment from his fleet, so that we may wrest from our foes the fruits of their present success. You will know by letters from Martinique, whether these our hopes are well or ill founded.

We have not had a line from you since the short letter of information respecting Byron's sailing, which you signed jointly with Mr. Adams. I hope this does not arise from any other circumstance than a want of a good conveyance for important despatches. We have had a few short letters from Mr. Adams, with gazettes. Late

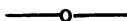
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\* *In Congress, October 6th, 1778.*—"Resolved, That the Honorable Benjamin Franklin, Arthur Lee, and John Adams, or any of them, be directed forthwith to apply to Dr. Price, and inform him that it is the desire of Congress to consider him a citizen of the United States, and to receive his assistance in regulating their finances. That if he shall think it expedient to remove with his family to America, and afford such assistance, a generous provision shall be made for requiting his services."

as it is, I enclose a quadruplicate of your credentials ; and I wish you success and every satisfaction in your important agency, being with much respect,

Sir, &c.,

JAMES LOVELL,  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, February 8th, 1779.

Sir,

The Marquis de la Fayette having sailed from Boston the day before the arrival there of letters sent from hence for you by the President of Congress, I now forward to you duplicates of those letters, with a course of newspapers *via* St Eustatia, having a very fine opportunity to that island, and hoping they will reach you securely from thence in a Dutch bottom.

I am, &c.,

JAMES LOVELL,  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, February 22d, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I received your proposition for removing the stumbling-block. Your constant desire of peace ought to endear you to both sides ; but this proposition seems to be naturally impracticable. We can never think of quitting a solid alliance, made and ratified, in order to be in a state for receiving unknown proposals of peace, which may vanish in the discussion. The truth is, we have no kind of faith in your Government, which appears to us as insidious and deceitful as it is unjust and cruel ; its character is that of the Spider in Thomson,

————— cunning and fierce,  
Mixture abhorr'd !

Besides, we cannot see the necessity of our relinquishing our alliance with France in order to a treaty, any more than of your relinquishing yours with Holland.

I am, very affectionately, yours,

N. A.\*

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\* North America.



## LETTER RESPECTING CAPTAIN COOK.

Passy, March 10th, 1779.

To all Captains and Commanders of armed Ships, acting by Commission from the Congress of the United States of America, now at War with Great Britain.

Gentlemen,

A ship having been fitted out from England before the commencement of this war, to make discoveries of new countries in unknown seas, under the conduct of that most celebrated navigator, Captain Cook—an undertaking truly laudable in itself, as the increase of geographical knowledge facilitates the communication between distant nations, in the exchange of useful products and manufactures and the extension of arts, whereby the common enjoyments of human life are multiplied and augmented, and science of other kinds increased, to the benefit of mankind in general;

This is therefore most earnestly to recommend to every one of you, that in case the said ship, which is now expected to be soon in the European seas on her return, should happen to fall into your hands, you would not consider her as an enemy, nor suffer any plunder to be made of the effects contained in her, nor obstruct her immediate return to England, by detaining her or sending her into any other part of Europe or America, but that you would treat the said Captain Cook and his people with all civility and kindness, affording them, as common friends to mankind, all the assistance in your power, which they may happen to stand in need of. In so doing, you will not only gratify the generosity of your own dispositions, but there is no doubt of your obtaining the approbation of Congress, and of your own American owners.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,

*Minister Plenipotentiary from the Congress of the  
United States to the Court of France.*

—o—

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Dear Sir,

Passy, March 21st, 1779.

I received duly yours of the 2d instant. I am sorry you have had so much trouble in the affair of the prisoners. You have been deceived as well as I. No cartel ship has yet appeared; and it is now

evident that the delays have been of design, to give more opportunity of seducing the men by promises and hardships to seek their liberty in engaging against their country; for we learn from those who have escaped, that there are persons continually employed in cajoling and menacing them; representing to them that we neglect them; that your Government is willing to exchange them; and that it is our fault it is not done; that all the news from America is bad on their side; we shall be conquered and they will be hanged if they do not accept the gracious offer of being pardoned, on condition of serving the King, &c. A great part of your prisoners have been kept these six months on board a ship in Brest road, ready to be delivered; where I am afraid they were not so comfortably accommodated as they might have been in French prisons. They are now ordered on shore. Dr. Bancroft has received your letter here. He did not go to Calais.

Knowing how earnestly and constantly you wish for peace, I cannot end a letter to you without dropping a word on that subject, to mark that my wishes are still in unison with yours. After the barbarities your nation has exercised against us, I am almost ashamed to own that I feel sometimes for her misfortunes and her insanities. Your veins are open, and your best blood continually running. You have now got a little army into Georgia, and are triumphing in that success. Do you expect ever to see that army again? I know not what General Lincoln or General Thompson may be able to effect against them; but if they stay through the summer in that climate, there is a certain *General Fever* that I apprehend will give a good account of most of them. Perhaps you comfort yourselves that our loss of blood is as great as yours. But, as physicians say, there is a great difference in the facility of repairing that loss between an old body and a young one. America adds to her numbers annually one hundred and fifty thousand souls. She, therefore, grows faster than you can diminish her, and will out-grow all the mischief you can do her. Have you the same prospects? But it is unnecessary for me to represent to you, or you to me, the mischiefs that each nation is subjected to by the war; we all see clear enough the nonsense of continuing it. The difficulty is, where to find sense enough to put an end to it.

Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me, &c.,

**B. FRANKLIN.**

DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, April 22d, 1779.

My dear Friend,

The bearer of this and some other papers is a very sensible and worthy gentleman, with whom I had the pleasure of contracting an acquaintance since the commencement of the American troubles, originally upon the business of the American prisoners. It is a satisfaction to me at all times to have found him a friend to the restoration of peace between the two countries. It has likewise been an additional satisfaction and confirmation to me, in my own thoughts upon that subject, to find that his sentiments I think upon most, or all of the subjects upon which we have conversed, have coincided with mine. We both seem possessed of the opinion that some plan of opening a negotiation upon preliminaries which each side might find to be a sufficient security to itself might be practicable; and then your sentiment, which you gave me in a letter some years ago, might have its free scope and effect, viz: *A little time given for cooling might have excellent effects.*

The sentiments I have opened to you in my late letters, for some months past, and which I have reduced in an enclosed paper into a more specific shape, seem to me, upon very repeated reflection, to promise the fairest ground of good expectation. These propositions originate from myself, as a mediator; I have communications with both sides, but certainly no authority to make proposals from either; and perhaps neither side, if I were to make the propositions separately to each, (being myself unauthorized,) might give me positive consent. Each side, separately, might say No, from what is called political prudence, and yet each side might secretly wish that the offer could be made, with a *done first*, from the other party. I think the proposition of a truce for five or seven years, leaving all things in the present dispute *in statu quo*, must be advantageous to all parties, if it were only in consideration that a general satisfactory peace to all parties *may* come among the *excellent effects of time given for cooling*. We can but fight it out at last. War never comes too late; wisdom may step in between. These matters have stolen upon us, and have arisen to great and formidable consequences from small and unexpected beginnings; but henceforward we should know by experience what to expect. If the rage of war could but be

abated for a sufficient length of time for reason and reflection to operate, I think it would never revive. I cannot pretend to forecast the result of any negotiation, but I think war would not revive, which is all that I want for my argument. Peace is a *bonum in se*, whereas the most favorable events of war are but, relatively, lesser evils; certainly they are evils; *mala in se*, not *bona in se*.

I hope that a cessation of hostilities would produce a renewal of reflection; but even to take the argument at the worst advantage, the two parties are at a cooling distance of three thousand miles asunder. If the flames of war could be but once extinguished, does not the Atlantic ocean contain cold water enough to prevent their bursting out again? I am very strongly of opinion that the two nations of Great Britain and North America would accord to the proposition of a truce for *cooling*. I cannot say whether a British Ministry would accord to it, because they will not tell me; nor can I say whether an American Plenipotentiary would accord to it, because, probably, you will not tell me. I put myself into your hands, however, when I tell you frankly, I am of opinion both would accord to it, if there could be a *done first* on either side, to bind the bargain fast. You have the odds of me in this matter, because you know one half of the question; and I cannot give you any proof on the other side, but only my own presumptive judgment upon observation, and upon a course of reasoning in my own thoughts.

But for France. My judgment would be, that if the proposition of the proposed preliminaries should be agreeable to America, France would do very unhandsomely to defeat it by their refusal. I likewise think it the interest of France, because their interest leads them to go to a certain point, and no further. There is a disparity in the operation of the terms of the alliance on the part of France, and on the part of America. The more vigorously France interposes, the better for America; in proportion to their exertions, they create, less or more, a diversion of the British force; this reasoning goes straight forward for America; but it is not so with France. There is a certain point to France, beyond which their work would fail, and recoil upon themselves; if they were to drive the British Ministry totally to abandon the American war, it would become totally a French war. The events of a twelvemonth past seem to bear testimony to this course of reasoning. The disadvantage upon the bargain to America is, that the efficacy of the French

alliance to them presupposes their continuance in the war. The demur to France is, that the liberation of their new ally recoils with double weight of the war upon themselves, without any ulterior points of advantage in view as dependent upon that alliance. I think the interest of all parties coincides with the proposition of preliminaries.

The proposed preliminaries appear to me to be just and equitable to all parties; but the great object with me is to come to some preliminaries. I could almost add, whatever those preliminaries might be, provided a suspension of arms for an adequate term of years were one, I think it would be ten thousand to one against any future renewal of the war. It is not necessary to enter at large into the reasons which induce me to think that the British Ministry, as well as the American Plenipotentiary, would consent to the terms of the proposed preliminaries; for indeed I do not know that I am founded in that opinion with respect to either, but still I believe it of both. But what can a private person do in such a case, wishing to be a mediator for peace, having access to both parties, but equally uncertain of the reception of his mediation on either side? I must hesitate to take any public step, as by a proposition in Parliament or by any other means, to drive the parties to an explanation upon any specific proposals; and yet I am very unwilling to let the session pass without some proposition upon which the parties may meet, if they should be so inclined, as I suspect them to be. I have been endeavoring to feel pulses for some months, but all is dumb show. I cannot say that I meet with any thing discouraging, to my apprehension, either as to equitableness or practicability of the proposition for preliminaries. If I could but simply receive sufficient encouragement that I should not run any hazard of obstructing any other practicable propositions by obtruding mine, I should be very much satisfied to come forward in that case with mine, to furnish a beginning at least, which might lead to peace.

There is nothing that I wish so much as to have an opportunity of seeing and conversing with you, having many things to say to you; but if that cannot yet happen, I have only to say that, whatever communication you may think proper to make to me, which may lead to peace, you may be assured that I shall be most strenuous in applying it to that end. In all cases of difficulty in

human life there must be confidence some where, to enable us to extricate nations from the evils attendant upon national disputes, as they arise out of national passions, jealousies, and points of honor. I am not sure whether the extreme caution and diffidence of persons in political life be not the cause almost as frequently of the unnecessary protraction of the miseries of war, as of the final production of any superior good to any State. Peace now is better than peace a twelvemonth hence, at least by all the lives that may be lost in the meanwhile, and by all the accumulated miseries that may intervene by that delay. When I speak of the necessity of confidence, I would not have you to think that I trust to all professions, promiscuously, with confidence. My thoughts are free respecting all parties; and for myself, if I thought it necessary for the end of attaining any additional confidence in your esteem to enable me to coöperate the more effectually towards the restoration of peace, there is nothing that I would wish you to be assured of but this—that no fallacious offers of insincerity, nor any pretext for covering secret designs, or for obtaining unfair advantages, shall ever pass through my hands.

Believe me truly to be, not only a lover of my country, but a sincere friend to peace and to the rights of mankind; and ever most affectionately yours,

D. HARTLEY.

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*Observations by Mr. Hartley.*

Lord North consented to Mr. Hartley's proposition for endeavoring to procure from the American Plenipotentiary or Plenipotentiaries some opening, that they would be willing to commence a parley, on propositions of peace between Great Britain and America; and supposed the terms which Mr. Hartley had in view would be something like a tacit cession of independence to America, with a truce for a certain term of years, to serve as a basis for a general treaty of accommodation and final settlement.

This last application (which was made on the 20th of April, 1779) of Mr. Hartley to Lord North, after several previous conferences on the subject, is the ground of the present confidential communication with Dr. Franklin, on the part of Mr. Hartley, who states to Dr. Franklin, as he did to Lord North, that an auspicious beginning of a negociation is *dimidium facti*.

Mr. Hartley's ideas of the probable course of the negotiation would be to the following effect :

1. Five Commissioners (or any three of them) to be appointed on the part of his Britannic Majesty to treat, consult, and agree upon the final settlement and pacification of the present troubles, upon safe, honorable, and permanent terms, subject to ratification by Parliament.

2. That any one of the aforesaid Commissioners may be empowered to agree, as a preliminary, to a suspension of hostilities by sea and land, for a certain term of five or seven years.

3. That any one of the aforesaid Commissioners be empowered to agree, as a second preliminary, to suspend the operation and effect of any and all acts of Parliament respecting America, for a certain term of five or seven years.

4. That it is expected, as a third preliminary, that America should be released, freed, and unengaged, from any treaties with foreign Powers, which may tend to embarrass or defeat the present proposed negotiation.

5. That a general treaty for negotiation shall be set on foot as soon as may be after the agreement of the foregoing preliminaries.

N. B. A doubt seeming to arise from Lord North, relative to the probability of any explanatory communication on the part of Dr. Franklin Mr. Hartley expressed, he thought it possible, that as a known friend to peace, he might be considered by Dr. Franklin as a depot of any communications which may serve from time to time to facilitate the terms of peace ; which therefore prevents this communication from being considered as any direct overture from Lord North to Dr. Franklin, or from Dr. Franklin to Lord North ; but as it is merely a mediatorial proposition of Mr. Hartley, as a private person, for the purpose of bringing the parties to a parley.

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*Instructions to John Paul Jones, Commander of the American Squadron in the service of the United States, now in the Port of L'Orient.*

1st. His Majesty having been pleased to grant some troops for a particular expedition, proposed to annoy our common enemy, in

which the sea force under your command might have an opportunity of distinguishing itself, you are to receive on board the ships of war, and the other vessels destined for that purpose, the troops that shall present themselves to you, afford them such accommodation as may be most proper for preserving their health, and convey them to such port or place as their commander shall desire to land them at.

2dly. When the troops are landed, you are to aid, by all means in your power, their operations, as they will be instructed in like manner to aid and support those you may make with your ships, that so, by this concurrence and union of your different forces, all that such a compounded strength is capable of may be effected.

3dly. You are, during the expedition, never to depart from the troops, so as not to be able to protect them in case of a repulse; and in all events you are to endeavor to effect their complete reëmbarkation on board the ships and transports under your command, when the expedition shall be ended.

4thly. You are to bring to France all the English seamen you may happen to take prisoners, in order to complete the good work you have already made such progress in, of delivering, by an exchange, the rest of our countrymen now languishing in the gaols of Great Britain.

5thly. As many of your officers and people have lately escaped from English prisons, either in Europe or America, you are to be particularly attentive to their conduct towards the prisoners which the fortune of war may throw into your hands, lest resentment of the more than barbarous usage by the English in many places towards the Americans should occasion a retaliation, and an imitation of what ought rather to be detested and avoided, for the sake of humanity and for the honor of our country.

6thly. In the same view, although the English have burnt wantonly many defenceless towns in America, you are not to follow this example, unless where a reasonable ransom is refused, in which case your own generous feelings, as well as this instruction, will induce you to give timely notice of your intention, that sick and ancient persons, women and children, may be first removed.

Done at Passy, this 28th day of April, 1779.

B. FRANKLIN,  
*Minister Plenipotentiary from the United  
States to the Court of France.*



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, May 4th, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I received your several favors, viz : one of April the 10th, one of the 20th, and two of the 22d, all on the same day, but by different conveyances.

I need not repeat, what we have each of us so often repeated, the wish for peace. I will begin by frankly assuring you, that though I think a direct, immediate peace, the best mode of present accommodation to Britain, as well as for America, yet if that *is not* at this time practicable, and a truce is practicable, I should not be against a truce; but this is merely on motives of *general humanity*, to obviate the evils men devilishly inflict on men in time of war, and to lessen as much as possible the similarity of earth and hell. For with regard to particular advantages respecting the States I am connected with, I am persuaded it is theirs to continue the war till England shall be reduced to that perfect impotence of mischief, which alone can prevail with her to let other nations enjoy "*Peace, Liberty, and Safety.*" I think, however, that a *short* truce, which must, therefore, be an *armed* truce, and put all parties to an almost equal expense with a continued war, is by no means desirable.

But this proposition of a truce, if made at all, should be made to France at the same time it is made to America. They have each of them too much honor, as well as too much sense, to listen separately to any propositions, which tend to separate them from each other.

I will now give you my thoughts on your ideas of a negotiation, in the order you have placed them. If you will number them in your copy, you will readily see to which my observations refer, and I may therefore be more concise.

*To the 1st.* I do not see the necessity or use of five Commissioners. A number of talkers lengthens discussions, and often embarrasses instead of aiding a settlement. Their different particular views, private interests, and jealousies of each other, are likewise so many rubs in the way, and it sometimes happens that a number cannot agree to what each privately thinks reasonable, and would have agreed to, or perhaps proposed, if alone. But this as the parties please.

*To the 2d.* The term of twenty-one years would be better for all

sides. The suspension of hostilities should be expressed to be between all parties at war ; and that the British troops and ships of war now in any of the United States be withdrawn.

*To the 3d.* This seems needless, and is a thing that may be done or omitted as you please ; America has no concern about those acts of Parliament.

*To the 4th.* The reason of proposing this is not understood, nor the use of it, nor what inducement there can be for us to agree to it. When you come to treat with both your enemies, you may negotiate away as much of these engagements as you can ; but Powers, who have made a firm, solid league, evidently useful to both, can never be prevailed with to dissolve it, for the vague expectation of another *in nubibus* ; nor even on the certainty, that another will be proposed, without knowing what are to be its articles. America has no desire of being free from her engagements to France. The chief is, that of continuing the war in conjunction with her, and not making a separate peace ; and this is an obligation not in the power of America to dissolve, being an obligation of *gratitude and justice* towards a nation which is engaged in war on her account, and for her protection ; and would be forever binding, whether such an article existed or not in the treaty ; and though it did not exist, an honest American would cut off his right hand, rather than sign an agreement with England contrary to the spirit of it.

*To the 5th.* As soon as you please.

If you had mentioned France in your proposed suspension of arms, I should have immediately shown it to the Minister, and have endeavored to support that idea. As it stands, I am in doubt whether I shall communicate your paper or not, though by your writing it is so fair it seems as if you intended it. If I do, I shall acquaint you with the result.

The bill of which you send me a copy was an excellent one at the time, and might have had great and good effects, if, instead of telling us haughtily that our humble petition should receive no answer, the Ministry had received and enacted that bill into a law. It might have erected a wall of brass round England, if such a measure had been adopted, when Friar Bacon's brazen head cried out, **TIME IS !** But the wisdom of it was not seen till after the fatal cry of **TIME'S PAST !**

I am, my dear friend, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

## TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Passy, May 26th, 1779.

Gentlemen,

The Marquis de la Fayette, who arrived here the 11th of February, brought me yours of October 28th, and the new commission, credentials, and instructions, which the Congress have honored me with. I have not since had an opportunity of writing that I could trust, for I see, by several instances, the orders given to private captains to throw their despatches into the sea when likely to be taken, are sometimes neglected, and sometimes so badly executed, that the letters are recovered by the enemy, and much inconvenience has attended their interception. You mention that you should speedily have opportunities of forwarding duplicates and triplicates of the papers; none of them has ever come to hand, nor have I received any other line from you of later date.

I immediately acquainted the Minister of Foreign Affairs with my appointment, and communicated to him, as usual, a copy of my credential letter, on which a day was named for my reception. A fit of the gout prevented my attendance at that time, and for some weeks after, but as soon as I was able to go through the ceremony I went to Versailles and was presented to the King, and received in all the forms. I delivered the letter of Congress into his Majesty's own hands, who in the most gracious manner expressed his satisfaction. And I have since constantly attended the levee every Tuesday, with the other Foreign Ministers, and have taken every proper occasion of repeating the assurances I am instructed to give of the grateful sentiments of Congress, and their determined resolution to fulfil religiously their engagements. Much pains are constantly taken by the enemy to weaken the confidence of this Court in their new allies by representing our people as weary of the war, and of the government of Congress; which body, too, they represent as distracted by dissensions, &c.; but all this has very little effect; and when on some occasions it has seemed to make a little impression, and create some apprehensions, I have not found it difficult to remove them. And it is my firm opinion that, notwithstanding the great losses suffered by the commerce of this kingdom, since the commencement of the war, the disposition of the Court to continue it (till its purpose of establishing our independence is completed) is not the least changed, nor their regard for us diminished.

The end of that part of the instructions which relates to American seamen taken by the French in English ships, had already been obtained, Captain Jones having had for some time an order from Court, directed to the keepers of the prisoners, requiring them to deliver to him such Americans as should be found in their hands, that they might be at liberty to serve under his command. Most of them have accordingly been delivered to him, if not all. The Minister of the Marine, having entertained a high opinion of him, from his conduct and bravery in taking the Drake, was desirous of employing him in the command of a particular enterprise, and to that end requested us to spare him, which we did, and sent the Ranger home under the command of his lieutenant. Various accidents have hitherto postponed his equipment, but he now has the command of a fifty gun ship with some frigates, all under American commissions and colors, fitted out at the King's expense, and will sail, it is said, about the 1st of June.

The Marquis de la Fayette was, with some land troops, to have gone with him; but I now understand the Marquis is not to go, the plan being a little changed. The Alliance being weakly manned at first, and the captain judging it necessary to be freed from thirty-eight of his men, who had been concerned in a conspiracy, and unwilling to take French seamen, I thought it best to send him directly home, as his ship might be of some protection to the vessels then about sailing to America; and Mr. Adams, who was desirous of returning soon, might be accommodated with a passage in a swift-sailing vessel. I accordingly offered her as a convoy to the trade at Nantes; but the gentlemen concerned did not think fit to wait for getting ready, as a French convoy offered for at least part of the voyage; and the Minister requesting she might be added to Captain Jones's little squadron, and offering to give a passage to Mr. Adams in the frigate with the new Ambassador, and to complete the Alliance's complement of men, I thought it best to continue her a little longer in Europe, hoping she may, in the projected cruise, by her extraordinary swiftness, be a means of taking prisoners enough to redeem the rest of our countrymen now in the English gaols. With this view, as well as to oblige the Minister, I ordered her to join Captain Jones at L'Orient, and obey his orders, where she is now accordingly. There have been great misunderstandings between the officers of that ship and their captain, and great discontents

among the men for want of clothes and money. I have been obliged to make great advances to appease those discontented, and I now hope the authority and prudence of Captain Jones will be able to remove, or at least to prevent, the ill effects of those misunderstandings. The conspirators are detained in prison, and will remain there, subject to such directions as Congress may think fit to give concerning them. The courts here would not, because they properly could not, undertake to try them; and we had not captains enough to make a court-martial for the purpose. The sending them to America, with evidence to convict them, will be a great trouble and expense; and perhaps their offence cannot be so clearly made out as to justify a punishment sufficient to deter by its exemplary severity. Possibly, the best use that can be made of them is to give them in exchange for as many Americans in the cartel now operating here. The perfidious conduct of the English and Scotch sailors in our service a good deal discourages the idea of taking them out of those prisons in order to employ them.

This cartel is at length brought about by the indefatigable endeavors of an old friend of mine, and a long declared one to America, Mr. Hartley, member of Parliament for Hull. The ship employed has already brought us one cargo from the prison at Plymouth. The number was intended for a hundred, but proved ninety-seven, and she is returned with as many in exchange, to bring us a second number from the prison at Portsmouth. This is to continue till all are exchanged. The Americans are chiefly engaged with Captains Jones and Landais. This exchange is the more remarkable, as our people were all committed as for high treason.

Agreeable to the seventh instruction, I have earnestly recommended the reduction of Halifax and Quebec. The Marquis de la Fayette joined me warmly in the application for this purpose, and I hope we shall in due time see some good effects from it. I have also in various ways, and through different channels, laid before the Ministry the distressed state of our finances in America. There seems a great willingness in all of them to help us, except in the Controller Monsieur Necker, who is said not to be well disposed towards us, and is supposed to embarrass every measure proposed to relieve us by grants of money. It is certain, that under the resolution, perhaps too hastily declared, of the King's imposing no new taxes on his subjects for this year, the Court has great difficulties

in defraying present expense, the vast exertions to put the navy in a condition to equal that of England having cost immense sums.

There is also a prevailing opinion, that the most effectual service to us is to be expected from rendering their marine superior to that of England. The King has, however, to encourage our loan in Holland, been so good as to engage under his hand, to be security for our payment of the interest of three millions of livres, but that loan has not yet amounted to more than about eighty thousand florins. Doctor Price, whose assistance was requested by Congress, has declined that service, as you will see by the copy of his letter enclosed. To me it seems, that the measure recommended by the wisdom of Congress, for diminishing the quantity of paper by taxes of large nominal sums, must have very salutary effects.

As to your finances here, it is fit that you should know the state of them. When the Commissioners of Congress made the proposition of paying the interest at Paris of the money borrowed in America, they understood the loan to be of five millions of dollars. They obtained from Government sums more than sufficient for the interest of such a sum. That sum has been increased, and if they could otherwise have provided for it, they have been from time to time drained by a number of unforeseen expenses, of which the Congress had no knowledge, and of others, occasioned by their orders and drafts; and the cargoes sent to the Commissioners by the committee have some of them been treacherously run away with by the seamen, or taken by the enemy, or, when arrived, have been hitherto applied toward the payment of debts, the tobaccos to the Farmers General according to contract, and the rice and indigo to Messrs. Hortalez & Co., from whom, by the way, we have not yet been able to procure any account.

I have lately employed an accountant, the son of our banker, to form complete books of our accounts, to be sent to Congress. They are not yet ready. When they are, I shall send them by the first safe opportunity. In the mean time, I may just mention some particulars of our disbursements. Great quantities of clothing, arms, ammunition, and naval stores, sent from time to time; payment of bills from Mr. Bingham, one hundred thousand livres; Congress bills in favor of Haywood & Co., above two hundred thousand; advanced to Mr. Ross, about twenty thousand pounds sterling; paid Congress drafts in favor of returned officers, ninety-three thousand and eighty livres;

to our prisoners in England, and after their escape, to help them home, and to other Americans here in distress, a great sum; I cannot at present say how much; supplies to Mr. Hodge for fitting out Captain Cunningham, very considerable; for the freight of ships to carry over the supplies, great sums; to Mr. William Lee, and Mr. Izard, five thousand five hundred pounds sterling; and for fitting the frigates Raleigh, Alfred, Boston, Providence, Alliance, Ranger, &c., I imagine not less than sixty or seventy thousand livres each, taken one with another; and for the maintenance of the English prisoners, I believe, when I get in all the accounts, I shall find one hundred thousand livres not sufficient, having already paid above sixty-five thousand on that article. And now the drafts of the Treasurer of the loans, coming very fast upon me, the anxiety I have suffered, and the distress of mind lest I should not be able to pay them, has for a long time been very great indeed.

To apply again to this Court for money for a particular purpose, which they had already, over and over again, provided for and furnished us, was extremely awkward; I therefore repeated the *general* applications, which we had made when together, for aids of money, and received the general answers, that the expense of Government for the navy was so great that at present it was exceedingly difficult to furnish the necessary supplies. That France, by sending a fleet to America, obliged the enemy to divide their forces, and left them so weak on the continent, as to aid us by lessening our expense, if it could not by giving us money, &c., &c., and I was asked if we did not receive money from Spain? I know, indeed, of some money received from thence, and I have heard of more, but know not how much, Mr. Arthur Lee, as Minister for Spain, having taken to himself all the management of that affair, and will account to Congress. I only understand that there is none of it left to assist in paying Congress bills. I at length obtained, as above-mentioned, the King's *bon* for payment of the interest of three millions, if I could borrow it in Holland, or elsewhere; but though two eminent houses in Amsterdam have undertaken it, and had hopes of success, they have both lately written to me that the great demands of money for Germany and for England had raised interest above our limits, and that the successes of the English in Georgia and St. Lucia, and in destroying the French trade, with the supposed division in Congress, all much magnified by the British Minister, and the pressing

application to borrow by several of our States separately, had made the moneyed people doubtful of our stability, as well as our ability to repay what might be lent us, and that it was necessary to wait a more favorable moment for proceeding with our loan.

In this situation, I have been applied to by Mr. William Lee, and lately, through our banker, by Mr. Izard, for more money for their expenses, and I am told there is much anger against me for declining to furnish them, and that I am charged with *disobeying an order of Congress*,\* and with cruelly attempting to distress gentlemen who are in the service of their country. They have, indeed, produced to me a resolve of Congress, *empowering them to draw* on the Commissioners in France for their expenses at foreign Courts; and doubtless Congress, when that resolve was made, intended to enable us to pay those drafts; but as that has not been done, and the gentlemen (except Mr. Lee for a few weeks) have not incurred any expense at foreign Courts, and if they had, the five thousand five hundred guineas, received by them in about nine months, seemed an ample provision for it, and as both of them might command money from England, I do not conceive that I *disobeyed an order of Congress*, and that if I did, the circumstances will excuse it; and I could have no intention to distress them, because I must know it is out of my power, as their private fortunes and credit will enable them at all times to pay their own expenses.

In short, the dreadful consequences of ruin to our public credit, both in America and Europe, that must attend protesting a single Congress draft for interest, after our funds were out, would have weighed with me against the payment of more money to those gentlemen, if the demand had otherwise been well founded. I am, however, in the judgment of Congress; and if I have done amiss, must submit dutifully to their censure. Thanks to God, I have this last week got over the difficulty, so far as relates to the bills, which will all be punctually paid; but if the Navy Board sends more ships here to be fitted, or the Congress continue to draw for the payment of other debts, the ships will be disappointed, and I shall probably be made a bankrupt, unless funds are, at the same time, sent over to discharge such demands.

With regard to the fitting out of ships, receiving and disposing of

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\* See Mr. Izard's Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 704.



cargoes, and purchasing of supplies, I beg leave to mention that, besides my being wholly unacquainted with such business, the distance I am from the ports renders my having any thing to do with it extremely inconvenient. Commercial agents have, indeed, been appointed by Mr. William Lee; but they and the captains are continually writing for my opinion or orders, or leave to do this or that, by which much time is lost to them, and much of mine taken up to little purpose, from my ignorance. I see clearly, however, that many of the captains are exorbitant in their demands; and, in some cases, I think those demands are too easily complied with by the agents—perhaps because the commissions are in proportion to the expense. I wish, therefore, the Congress would appoint the consuls they have a right to appoint by the treaty, and put into their hands all that sort of employment. I have in my desk, I suppose, not less than fifty applications from different ports, praying the appointment, and offering to serve gratis for the honor of it, and the advantage it gives in trade; but I imagine that, if consuls are appointed, they will be of our own people from America, who, if they should make fortunes abroad, might return with them to their country.

The commissions demanded by the agents seem to me, in some cases, very high. For instance, Mr. Schweighause, in a late account, charges five per cent. on the simple delivery of the tobaccos to the officer of the Farmers General in the port, and by that means makes the commission on the delivery of the two last cargoes amount to about six hundred and thirty pounds sterling. As there was no sale in the case, he has, in order to calculate the commission, valued the tobacco at ninety livres the hundred weight; whereas, it was, by our contract with the Farmers, to be delivered at about forty livres. I got a friend, who was going upon Change, to inquire among the merchants what was the custom in such cases of delivery. I send enclosed the result he has given me of his inquiries. In consequence, I have refused to pay the commission of five per cent. on this article; and I know not why it was, as is said, agreed with him at the time of his appointment, that he should have five per cent. on his transactions, if the custom is only two per cent., as by my information.

I have mentioned above the applications of separate States to borrow money in Europe, on which I beg leave to remark that, when

the General Congress are endeavoring to obtain a loan, these separate attempts interfere, and are extremely inconvenient, especially where some of the agents are empowered to offer a higher interest; and some have powers in that respect unlimited. We have likewise lately had applications from three several States to this Court to be furnished with great quantities of arms, ammunition, and clothing, or with money upon credit to buy them; and from one State to be supplied with naval stores and ships of war. These agents, finding that they had not interest to obtain such grants, have severally applied to me, and seem to think it my duty, as Minister for the United States, to support and enforce their particular demands. I have endeavored to do so; but I find the Ministers do not like these separate applications, and seem to think that they should properly come only through Congress, to whom the several States in such cases ought first to make known their wants, and then the Congress could instruct their Minister accordingly. This would save the King's Ministers a good deal of trouble, and the several States the expense of these particular agents; concerning whom I would add a little remark, that we have in America too readily, in various instances, given faith to the pretensions of strangers from Europe, and who offer their services as persons who have powerful friends and great interest in their own country, and by that means obtain contracts, orders, or commissions, to procure what we want, and who, when they come here, are totally unknown, and have no other credit but what such commissions give them; or, if known, the commissions do not add so much to their credit as they diminish that of their employers.

I have received two letters from a Frenchman, settled in one of the ports of Barbary, offering himself to act as our Minister with the Emperor, with whom he pretended to be intimate, and acquainting me that his Imperial Majesty wondered we had never sent to thank him for being the first Power on this side of the Atlantic that had acknowledged our independence, and opened his ports to us; advising that we should send the Emperor a present. On inquiry at the office in whose department Africa is included, I learned the character of this man to be such that it was not safe to have any correspondence with him, and therefore I did not answer his letters. I suppose Congress has received the memorial we presented to this Court respecting the Barbary States, and requesting the King's good

offices with them, agreeable to the treaty; and also the answer, expressing the King's readiness to perform those good offices whenever the Congress should send us instructions, and make provision for the necessary presents;\* or, if those papers have not yet got to hand, they will be found among the copies carried over by Mr. Adams, and therefore I only mention them by way of remembrance. Whenever a treaty with the Emperor is intended, I suppose some of our naval stores will be an acceptable present, and the expectation of continued supplies of such stores a powerful motive for entering into, and continuing, a friendship.

I should send you copies of several other memorials and public papers; but as Mr. Adams goes in the same ship, and has the whole of our transactions during his time, it is not so necessary by this vessel. The disposition of this nation, in general, continues friendly towards us and our cause; and I do not see the least diminution of it, except among the West India merchants and planters, whose losses have rendered them a little discontented. Spain has been long acting as a mediator, but arming all the time most vigorously. Her naval force is now very great indeed, and as her last proposition of a long truce—in which America should be included and treated as independent in fact, though not expressly acknowledged as such—has been lately rejected by England, it is now thought that her open junction with France in the war is not far distant.

The Commissioners here have a power in general terms to treat of peace, friendship, and commerce, with European States; but I apprehend this is scarce explicit enough to authorise me to treat of such a truce, if the proposition should again come upon the *tapis*. I therefore wish the Congress to consider of it, and give such powers as may be necessary to whom they may think proper, that, if a favorable opportunity of making an advantageous treaty should offer, it may not be missed.

Admiral Arbuthnot, who was going to America with a large convoy and some troops, has been detained by a little attempt upon Jersey; and contrary winds, since that affair was over, have detained him further, till within these few days.

Since I began writing this letter, I have received a packet from

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\* Correspondence of the Commissioners at the Court of France, Vol. I, pp. 314, 330, 331, 337.

the Committee, by way of Eustatia and Holland, sent by Mr. Lovell, containing his letters of December the 8th, January the 29th, and February the 8th, with one from the President, dated January the 3d. Several papers are mentioned as sent with them, and by other opportunities; but none are come to hand, except the resolution to postpone the attempt on Canada, and these are the first despatches received here since the date of those sent by the Marquis de la Fayette. I have just received a letter from Mr. Bingham, acquainting me that the ship Deane, and the General Gates, are just arrived at Martinique, and apply to him to be careened, refitted, and procure a fresh supply of provisions; and that, though he has no orders, he must draw upon me for the expense. I think it right to acquaint you thus early, that I shall be obliged to protest his bills.

I have just obtained from his Majesty orders to the Government of Gaudaloupe to make reasonable reparation to Captain Giddens, of Newbury, for the loss of his vessel, sunk in mistake by a battery of that island. Great preparations are making here, with much activity in all the sea-ports, taking up transports, and building small vessels proper for the landing of troops, &c., so that many think an invasion of England or Ireland is intended. The intention, whatever it is, may change; but the opinion of such an intention, which seems to prevail in England, may tend to keep their troops and ships at home.

General and Lord Howe, Generals Cornwallis and Grey, Colonel Montresor, and Captain Hammond, and others, have formally given it as their opinion, in Parliament, that the conquest of America is impracticable. This week, as we hear, John Maxwell, Joseph Galloway, Andrew Allen, John Patterson, Theophilus Morris, Enoch Story, and Jabez Fisher, are to be examined to prove the contrary. One would think the first set were likely to be the best judges.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—○—  
TO JAMES LOVELL.

Sir,

Passy, June 2d, 1779.

I received a few days since, via Eustatia and Holland, the triplicates of your several favors of December the 8th, January the 29th, and

February the 8th. The preceding copies of the same dates never came to hand. I thank you very much for the newspapers, though the disputes I see in them give me pain. You observe rightly that the want of good conveyances obstructs much the punctuality of your correspondence. The number of long letters I have written to America has almost discouraged me from writing, except by such an opportunity as this. You may judge of the uncertainty of letters getting to hand, when I tell you that, though you mention the having sent me quadruplicates of my credentials, only those by the Marquis de la Fayette have yet appeared.

I am glad to understand that you are taking measures to restore the value of your money, by taxing largely to reduce the quantity. I believe no financier in the world can put you upon a more effectual method. The English have had a little flow of spirits lately, from their success against the trade of France, and the news of the imagined conquest of Georgia; but the growing apprehension of a war with Spain also, begins to sober them, and, like people who have been drunk with drams, they now seem to have both the head and heart ache. The late letters from thence are in a more humble style, and some printed papers by the last post, known to be Ministerial, appear intended to prepare the minds of the people for propositions of peace. But these ebbs and flows are common with them, and the duration of neither is to be relied on.

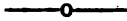
As I do not find, by any of yours, that a long letter of mine to you in July last, has come to hand, I send you herewith a copy of it, (though now a little stale,) as it serves to show my continued good opinion of a gentleman who, by the papers you have sent me, seems to be hardly used. I have never meddled with the dispute between him and Mr. Lee, but the suspicion of having a good will to him has drawn upon me a great deal of ill will from his antagonist. The Congress have wisely enjoined the Ministers in Europe to agree with one another. I had always resolved to have no quarrel, and have, therefore, made it a constant rule to answer no angry, affronting, or abusive letters, of which I have received many, and long ones, from Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard, who, I understand, and see, indeed, by the papers, have been writing liberally, or rather illiberally, against me, to prevent, as one of them says here, any impressions my writings against them might occasion to their prejudice, but I have never before mentioned them in any of my letters.

Our scheme here for packet boats did not continue.\* I wish Congress could fall on some method of sending some little light vessels once a month, to keep up a correspondence more regular. Even the receiving of letters of a certain date, though otherwise of no importance, might serve to refute the false news of our adversaries on both sides of the water, which have sometimes too long their intended effect before the truth arrives. I see that frequently little pilot boats, of twenty-five or thirty tons burthen, arrive safe from Virginia; the expense of such would not be great.

I beg leave to recommend earnestly to your civilities M. le Chevalier de la Luzerne, who goes over to succeed M. Gerard, as the King's Minister to the Congress. He bears here a most amiable character, has great connexions, and is a hearty friend to the American cause.

With great esteem, I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, June 13th, 1779.

Sir,

By way of Martinique I forward to you gazettes, journals, and one or two pamphlets. The situation of things in Congress has been such for some time past, that the Committee of Foreign Affairs have been drawn on to look daily for some interesting decisions to communicate to you, which must account for their silence many weeks. I am once again left alone, and therefore in too delicate circumstances to give you any detail of matters agitated, but not concluded, respecting your commission. I enclose a late resolve,†

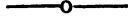
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\* This scheme may be found in the Correspondence of the Commissioners, Vol. I, p. 208.

† In Congress, June 5th, 1779.—“Resolved, That the Committee for Foreign Affairs be directed to write immediately to the Commissioners at the Court of France, and desire them to transmit an account of their proceedings in Mr. Beaumarchais's accounts, pursuant to the order of Congress of the 13th day of April, 1778.”

to which I beg your attention, and I entreat that you will believe me to be, with much respect, sir, your most obedient servant,

JAMES LOVELL,  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*



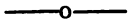
JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, July 9th, 1779.

Sir,

I send by this opportunity journals and gazettes, with some letters, which were to have gone by way of Martinique some time ago, with others that I hope will reach you by that channel. I add a complete set of Journals, as far as they are printed, viz: 1st volume, 2d volume, and from January 9th to June 12th this year, with two spare pamphlets of Nos. 2, 3, 11, 12, to make those already sent complete. Perhaps I may have the honor of writing again before the vessel sails out, though she is now falling down the river.

Your most obedient, humble servant, JAMES LOVELL,  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, July 16th, 1779.

Sir,

We find by the Minister of France, that your appointment has given high satisfaction to his Court, and we are encouraged to expect proofs of its most confidential reliance upon your character. We have not had a line from you of this year's date; indeed, I believe your latest is November the 7th, 1778. Two days ago we received several letters from Doctor Lee and one from Mr. Izard; the latter of March 4th, the former up to April 6th. The vessel was from Rochelle about the middle of May.

It was unfortunate that we did not get the information of Mr. Lee earlier, respecting the designs of the enemy against Connecticut. They had accomplished a part of them a few days before. Will no one under a commission from these United States retaliate on the

coast of England, for the burning of our beautiful Fairfield? A single privateer might, I think, show there a striking sample of the species of war carried on by Britain against America. We are told this evening, that General Lincoln has had an advantage over Prevost, in an open field fight, in which the militia behaved to admiration, on the 20th of June.

We forward two letters for "our great, faithful, beloved friend and ally, Louis Sixteenth, King of France and Navarre." We submit, however, the superscription to your judgment.

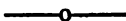
You will manage the invoices by your best abilities. The probability of success was held out to us by one, who doubtless makes known by this opportunity how much our present circumstances render such aids essential to us. A report of the Treasury, respecting the just stipend of our late and present Ministers at foreign Courts, is not quite determined upon. A decision is peculiarly necessary as to Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard, after the proceedings here of June 8th. I put up for you a set of the Journals, which have been printed this year, adding some spare numbers to complete what have been sent in part of No. 15.

Presuming from report, and a passage of a letter from Doctor Lee, that Mr. Adams is on his return hither, we do not write to him more. Should he remain in France, we beg he may be made acquainted with the cause of our omission. Good as this opportunity is, we expect a much better one shortly, when we shall renew assurances of being, &c.,

JAMES LOVELL,

*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*

P. S. The letters and papers respecting M. de Francy's agency, were only this day delivered to us from the Secretary's office; but M. de Francy had sextuples before.



INSTRUCTIONS FROM CONGRESS TO B. FRANKLIN.

In Congress, August 14th, 1779.

Sir,

Having determined, in order to put a period to the present war, conformably to the humane dispositions which sway the allied Powers, that we would not insist on a direct acknowledgment by



Great Britain of our right in the fisheries, this important matter is liable to an incertitude which may be dangerous to the political and commercial interests of the United States. We have therefore agreed and resolved that our right should in no case be given up; that we would not form any treaty of commerce with Great Britain, nor carry on any trade or commerce whatsoever with her, unless she shall make an express stipulation on that subject; and that if she shall, after a treaty of peace, disturb the inhabitants of these States in the exercise of it, we will make it a common cause to obtain redress for the parties injured.

But, notwithstanding the precautions, as Great Britain may again light up the flames of war, and use our exercise of the fisheries as her pretext—and since some doubts may arise whether this object is so effectually guarded by the treaty of alliance with His Most Christian Majesty that any molestation therein, on the part of Great Britain, is to be considered as a *casus federis*—you are to endeavor to obtain of his Majesty an explanation on that subject, upon the principle that, notwithstanding the high confidence reposed in his wisdom and justice, yet, considering the uncertainty of human affairs, and how doubts may be afterwards raised in the breasts of his royal successors, the great importance of the fisheries renders the citizens of these States very solicitous to obtain his Majesty's sense with relation to them, as the best security against the ambition and rapacity of the British Court. For this purpose, you will propose the following article, in which, nevertheless, such alterations may be made as the circumstances and situation of affairs shall render convenient and proper. Should the same be agreed to, and executed, you are immediately to transmit a copy thereof to our Minister at the Court of Spain.

Whereas, by the treaty of alliance between the Most Christian King and the United States of North America, the two parties guaranty mutually from that time, and forever, against all other Powers, to wit: the United States to his Most Christian Majesty the possessions then appertaining to the crown of France in America, as well as those which it may acquire by the future treaty of peace; and his Most Christian Majesty guaranties, on his part, to the United States their liberty, sovereignty, and independence, absolute and unlimited, as well in matters of government as commerce, and also their possessions, and the additions or conquests that their

confederation might obtain during the war, according to the said treaty; and the said parties did further agree and declare that, in case of a rupture between France and England, the said reciprocal guarantee should have its full force and effect the moment such war should break out; and, whereas doubts may hereafter arise how far the said guarantee extends to this case, to wit: that Great Britain should molest or disturb the subjects and inhabitants of France, or of the said States, in taking fish on the banks of Newfoundland, and other the fishing banks and seas of North America, formerly and usually frequented by the subjects and inhabitants respectively; and, whereas the said King and the United States have thought proper to determine with precision the true intent and meaning of the said guarantee in this respect:

Now, therefore, as a further demonstration of their mutual good will and affection, it is hereby agreed, concluded, and determined as follows, to wit: that if, after the conclusion of the treaty or treaties, which shall terminate the present war, Great Britain shall molest or disturb the subjects or inhabitants of the said United States in taking fish on the banks, seas, and places formerly used and frequented by them, so as not to encroach on the territorial rights which may remain to her after the termination of the present war as aforesaid; and war should, thereupon, break out between the said United States and Great Britain, or if Great Britain shall molest or disturb the subjects and inhabitants of France in taking fish on the banks, seas, and places formerly used and frequented by them, so as to encroach on the territorial rights of Great Britain, as aforesaid, and war should thereupon break out between France and Great Britain, in either of those cases of war, as aforesaid, his Most Christian Majesty and the said United States shall make it a common cause, and aid each other mutually with their good offices, their counsels, and their forces, according to the exigence of conjunctures, as becomes good and faithful allies; provided always, that nothing herein contained shall be taken or understood as contrary to, or inconsistent with, the true intent and meaning of the treaties already subsisting between his Most Christian Majesty and the said States; but the same shall be taken and understood as explanatory of, and conformable to, those treaties.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN JAY, *President.*

## TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

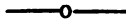
Passy, August 24th, 1779.

Sir,

The Congress, sensible of your merit towards the United States, but unable adequately to reward it, determined to present you with a sword, as a small mark of their grateful acknowledgment. They directed it to be ornamented with suitable devices. Some of the principal actions of the war, in which you distinguished yourself by your bravery and conduct, are, therefore, represented upon it. These, with a few emblematic figures, all admirably well executed, make its principal value. By the help of the exquisite artists France affords, I find it easy to express every thing but the sense we have of your worth, and our obligations to you. For this figures, and even words, are found insufficient. I therefore only add that, with the most perfect esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My grandson goes to Havre with the sword, and will have the honor of presenting it to you.



## THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Havre, August 29th, 1779.

Sir,

Whatever expectations might have been raised from the sense of past favors, the goodness of the United States for me has ever been such, that, on every occasion, it far surpasses any idea I could have conceived. A new proof of that flattering truth I find in the noble present which Congress has been pleased to honor me with, and which is offered in such a manner by your Excellency, as will exceed any thing but the feelings of my unbounded gratitude.

In some of the devices, I cannot help finding too honorable a reward for those slight services which, in concert with my fellow-soldiers, and under the godlike American hero's orders, I had the good luck to render. The sight of these actions, where I was a witness of American bravery and patriotic spirit, I shall ever enjoy with that pleasure which becomes a heart glowing with love for the

nation, and the most ardent zeal for their glory and happiness. Assurances of gratitude, which I beg leave to present to your Excellency, are much too inadequate to my feelings, and nothing but those sentiments may properly acknowledge your kindness towards me. The polite manner in which Mr. Franklin was pleased to deliver that inestimable sword lays me under great obligations to him, and demands my particular thanks.

With the most perfect respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

LA FAYETTE.

—o—

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, September 30th, 1779.

Sir,

I have within these few days received a number of despatches from you, which have arrived by the Mercury and other vessels. Hearing this instant of an opportunity from Bordeaux, and that the courier sets out from Versailles at five this evening, I embrace it just to let you know that I have delivered the letters from Congress to the King, and have laid the invoice of supplies desired (with a translation) before the Ministers; and though I have not yet received a positive answer, I have good reason to believe I shall obtain most of them, if not all. But as this demand will cost the Court a vast sum, and their expenses in the war are prodigious, I beg I may not be put under the necessity, by occasional drafts on me, of asking for more money than is required to pay our bills for interest. I must protest those I have advice of from Martinique and New Orleans, (even if they were drawn by permission of Congress,) for want of money; and I wish the Committee of Commerce would caution their correspondents not to embarrass me with their bills.

I put into my pocket nothing of the allowance Congress has been pleased to make me. I shall pay it all in honoring their drafts and supporting their credit; but do not let me be burthened with supporting the credit of every one who has claims on the Board of Commerce or the Navy. I shall write fully by the Mercury.

I send you some of the latest newspapers, and have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MR. BRIDGEN.

Passy, October 2d, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I received your favor of the 17th past, and the two samples of copper are since come to hand. The metal seems to be very good, and the price reasonable, but I have not yet received the orders necessary to justify my making the purchase proposed. There has, indeed, been an intention to strike copper coin, that may not only be useful as small change, but serve other purposes. Instead of repeating continually upon every halfpenny the dull story, that every body knows, and what it would have been no loss to mankind if nobody had ever known, that George the Third is King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, &c., &c., to put on one side some important proverb of Solomon, some pious moral, some prudential or economical precept, the frequent inculcation of which, by seeing it every time one receives a piece of money, might make an impression upon the mind, especially of young persons, and tend to regulate their conduct; such as on some, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*; on others, *Honesty is the best policy*; on others, *He that by the plough would thrive, himself must either lead or drive*; on others, *Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee*; on others, *A penny saved is a penny got*; on others, *He that buys what he has no need of, will soon be forced to sell his necessaries*; on others, *Early to bed and early to rise, will make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise*; and so on, to a great variety.

The other side it was proposed to fill with good designs, drawn and engraved by the best artists in France, of all the different species of barbarity with which the English have carried on the war in America, expressing every abominable circumstance of their cruelty and inhumanity that figures can express, to make an impression on the minds of posterity as strong and durable as that on the copper. This resolution has been a long time forborne, but the late burning of defenceless towns in Connecticut, on the flimsy pretence that the people fired from behind their houses, when it is known to have been premeditated, and ordered from England, will probably give the finishing provocation, and may occasion a vast demand for your metal. I thank you for your kind wishes respecting my health. I return them most cordially fourfold into your own bosom.

Adieu,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN JAY, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, October 4th, 1779.

Sir,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor to write to me of the      of June last, enclosing acts of Congress respecting bills of exchange for two millions four hundred thousand livres Tournois, drawn on me in favor of M. de Beaumarchais. The bills have not yet appeared, but I shall accept them when they do, relying on the care of Congress to enable me to pay them. As to the accounts of that gentleman, neither the Commissioners, when we were all together, nor myself since, have ever been able to obtain a sight of them, though repeatedly promised, and I begin to give over all expectation of them. Indeed, if I had them, I should not be able to do much with them, or to controvert any thing I might doubt in them, being unacquainted with the transactions and agreements on which they must be founded, and having small skill in accounts. Mr. Ross and Mr. Williams, pressing me to examine and settle theirs, I have been obliged to request indifferent persons, expert in such business, to do it for me, subject to the revision of Congress; and I could wish that my time and attention were not taken up by any concerns in mercantile affairs, and thereby diverted from others more important.

The letters of Congress to the King were very graciously received. I have earnestly pressed the supplies desired, and the Ministers (who are extremely well disposed towards us) are now actually studying the means of furnishing them. The assistance of Spain is hoped for. We expect to hear from thence in a few days. The quantity is great, and will cost a vast sum. I have this day accepted three of your drafts, part of the three hundred and sixty thousand livres, drawn for on the 9th of June; but when I ask for money to pay them, I must mention that, as they were drawn to purchase military stores, an abatement equal to the value may be made of the quantity demanded from hence; for I am really ashamed to be always worrying the Ministers for more money. And as to the private loans expected, I wrote in a former letter that our public credit was not yet sufficiently established, and that the loan in Holland had not exceeded eighty thousand florins, to which there has since been no addition. A Mr. Neufville came from thence to me last spring, proposing to procure great sums, if he

might be employed for that purpose, and the business taken away from the house that had commenced it. His terms, at first, were very extravagant, such as that all the estates, real and personal, in the Thirteen Provinces should be mortgaged to him; that a fifth part of the capital sum borrowed should, every year, for five years, be laid out in commodities, and sent to Holland, consigned to him, to remain in his hands till the term (ten years) stipulated for final payment was completed, as a security for the punctuality of it, when he was to draw the usual commission; that all vessels or merchandize coming from America to Europe should be consigned to him or his correspondents, &c., &c. As I rejected these with some indignation, he came down to the more reasonable one of doing the business as it was done by the other house, who, he said, could do no more, being destitute of the interest which he possessed.

I did not care abruptly to change a house that had, in other respects, been very friendly and serviceable to us, and thereby throw a slur upon their credit, without a certainty of mending our affairs by it; and therefore told Mr. Neufville that if he could procure and show me a list of subscribers, amounting to the sum he mentioned, or near it, I would comply with his proposition. This he readily and confidently undertook to do. But, after three months, during which he acquainted me from time to time that the favorable moment was not yet come, I received, instead of the subscription, a new set of propositions, among the terms of which were an additional *one per cent.*, and a patent from Congress appointing him and his sons "*Commissioners for Trade and Navigation, and Treasurers of the General Congress and of every private State of the Thirteen United States of North America, through the Seven United Provinces,*" with other extravagancies which I mention, that it may be understood why I have dropped a correspondence on this subject with a man who seemed to me a vain promiser, extremely self-interested, and aiming chiefly to make an appearance without solidity, and who, I understand, intends applying directly to Congress, some of his friends censuring me as neglecting the public interest in not coming into his measures.

The truth is, I have no expectations from Holland while interest received there from other nations is so high, and our credit there so low; while particular American States offer higher interest than the

Congress, and even our offering to raise our interest tends to sink our credit. My sole dependence now is upon this Court. I think reasonable assistance may be obtained here; but I wish I may not be obliged to fatigue it too much with my applications, lest it should grow tired of the connexion.

Mr. Ross has lately demanded of me near twenty thousand pounds sterling, due to him from the Committee of Commerce, but I have been obliged to refuse him, as well as an application made last week by Mr. Izard for more money, though he has already had 2,500 guineas, and another from Mr. Arthur Lee, though he has had five hundred guineas since the news of his being out of this Commission.\* He writes me that he will return to America forthwith, if I do not undertake to supply his expenses. As I see no likelihood of his being received at Madrid, I could not but approve his resolution.

We had reason to expect some great events from the action of the fleets this summer in the Channel, but they are all now in port without having effected any thing. The junction was late, and the length of time the Brest fleet was at sea, equal to an East India voyage, partly on the hot Spanish coast, occasioned a sickness among the people, that made their return necessary; they had chased the English fleet, which refused combat. The sick men are recovering fast since they were landed; and the proposed descent on England does not yet seem to be quite given up, as the troops are not withdrawn from the ports.

Holland has not yet granted the succors required by the English, nor even given an answer to the requisition presented by Sir Joseph Yorke. The aids will be refused; and as the refusal must be disagreeable, it will be postponed from time to time. The expectations of assistance from Russia and Prussia seem also to have failed the English, and they are as much at a loss to find effective friends in Europe as they have been in America.

Portugal seems to have a better disposition towards us than heretofore. About thirty of our people, taken and set ashore on one of her islands by the English, were maintained comfortably by the Governor, during their stay there, furnished with every necessary,

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\* Ralph Izard's Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 704; and Arthur Lee's Correspondence, pp. 570, 574, 578.



and sent to Lisbon, where, on inquiry to whom payment was to be made for the expence they had occasioned, they were told that no reimbursement was expected: that it was the Queen's bounty, who had a pleasure in showing hospitality to strangers in distress. I have presented thanks, by the Portuguese Ambassador here, in behalf of Congress; and I am given to understand that probably in a little time the ports of that nation will be open to us, as well as those of Spain. What relates to Spain, I suppose Mr. Lee informs you of.

The sword ordered by Congress for the Marquis de la Fayette being at length finished, I sent it down to him at Havre, where he was with the troops intended for the invasion. I wrote a letter with it, and received an answer, copies of which I enclose, together with a description of the sword, and drawings of the work upon it, which was executed by the best artists in Paris, and cost altogether two hundred guineas. The present has given him great pleasure, and some of the circumstances have been agreeable to the nation.

Our cartel goes on, a second cargo of American prisoners, one hundred and nineteen in number, being arrived and exchanged. Our privateers have dismissed a great number at sea, taking their written paroles to be given up in exchange for so many of our people in their gaols. This is not yet quite agreed to on the other side, but some expectations are given me that it may take place. Certainly, humanity would find its account in the practice of exchanging on parole, as all the horrors of imprisonment, with the loss of time and health, might be prevented by it.

We continue to insult the coasts of these *lords of the ocean* with our little cruisers. A small cutter, which was fitted out as a privateer at Dunkirk, called the Black Prince, has taken, ransomed, burnt, and destroyed above thirty sail of their vessels within these three months. The owners are about to give her a consort, called the Black Princess, for whom they ask a commission. The prisoners brought in serve to exchange our countrymen, which makes me more willing to encourage such armaments, though they occasion a good deal of trouble. Captain, now Commodore Jones, put to sea this summer with a little squadron, consisting of a ship of forty guns, the Alliance, another frigate of twenty, with some armed cutters; all under American colors, with Congress commissions. He has sent in several prizes, has greatly alarmed the coast of Ireland and Scotland,

and we just now hear that going north about, he fell in with a number of ships from the Baltic, convoyed by a fifty-gun ship and a twenty-four gun frigate, both of which he took after an obstinate engagement, and forced several of the others ashore. This news is believed, but we wait the confirmation and the particulars.

The blank commissions remaining, of those sent to us here, are all signed by Mr. Hancock, which occasions some difficulty. If Congress approves of my continuing to issue commissions, I wish to have a fresh supply, with the other necessary instructions, rules, bonds, &c., of which none are now left.

M. le Comte de Mollebois, esteemed one of the best Generals in this country, and who loves our cause, has given me a memorial, containing a project for a corps here for your service, which I promised to lay before Congress, and accordingly enclose a copy. I know nothing of the sentiments of Congress on the subject of introducing foreign troops among us, and therefore could give no expectation that the plan would be adopted. It will, however, be a pleasure to him to know that his good will to serve them has been acceptable to the Congress.

A Major Borre, who has been in America, and some other officers who have quitted our service in disgust, endeavor to give an idea that our nation does not love the French. I take all occasions to place in view the regard shown by Congress to good French officers, as a proof that the slight these gentlemen complain of is particular to themselves, and probably the effect of their own misbehavior. I wish for the future, when any of this sort of people leave our armies to come home, some little sketch of their conduct or character may be sent me, with the real causes of their resignation or departure, that I may be the more able to justify our country.

Here are returned in the last cartel a number of French sailors, who had engaged with Captain Cunningham, were taken in coming home in one of his prizes, and have been near two years in English prisons. They demand their wages and share of prize money. I send their claim, as taken before the officers of the classes at Dunkirk. I know nothing of the agreement which they allege was made with them. Mr. Hodge, perhaps, can settle the affair, so that they may have justice done them. These sort of things give me a great deal of trouble. Several of those men have made personal applications to me, and I must hear all their stories, though I cannot redress

them. I enclose also the claim of two gunners, upon a prize made by the Boston, Captain Tucker. I am persuaded that Congress wish to see justice done to the meanest stranger that has served them. It is justice that establishes a nation.

The Spanish Ambassador here delivered me several complaints against our cruisers. I imagine that all the injuries complained of are not justly chargeable to us, some of the smaller English cruisers having pillaged Spanish vessels under American colors, of which we have proof upon oath; and, also, that no such American privateers as are said to have committed these robberies, after coming out of Nantes, have ever been known there, or in any other part of France, or even to have existed. But if any of the complaints are well-founded, I have assured the Ambassador that the guilty will be punished, and reparation made.

The Swedish Ambassador also complains of the taking of a ship of his nation by Captain Landais, the master of which lays his damages at sixty thousand livres. I understand it was his own fault that he was stopped, as he did not show his papers. Perhaps this, if proved, may enable us to avoid the damages.

Since writing the above, I have received the following further particulars of the action between Commodore Jones and the English men of war. The forty-four gun ship is new, having been but six months off the stocks; she is called the *Serapis*; the other, of twenty guns, is the *Countess of Scarborough*. He had before taken a number of valuable prizes, particularly a rich ship bound to Quebec, which we suppose he may have sent to America. The English, from mistaken intelligence, imagining he had a body of troops with him to make descents, have had all their northern coasts alarmed, and have been put to very expensive movements of troops, &c.

The extravagant luxury of our country, in the midst of all its distresses, is to me amazing. When the difficulties are so great to find remittances to pay for the arms and ammunition necessary for our defence, I am astonished and vexed to find, upon inquiry, that much the greatest part of the Congress interest bills come to pay for tea, and a great part of the remainder is ordered to be laid out in gewgaws and superfluities. It makes me grudge the trouble of examining, and entering, and accepting them, which indeed takes a great deal of time.

I yesterday learned from M. de Monthieu that everything

necessary for equipping two frigates, of thirty-six guns each, such as sail-cloth, cordage, anchors, &c., &c., which we sent to the Congress from hence two years since, remains stored in the warehouses of his correspondent, Mr. Carrabass, at Cape François, having never been called for. Probably, by the miscarriage of letters, the Navy Board never heard of those goods being there. I shall, nevertheless, leave the application I have lately made for materials for a frigate of thirty-six guns to take its course. But I send you herewith copies of two invoices of the cargo of the *Therese*, one of which is what was sent by us, the other by M. de Beaunarchais, to the end that inquiry may be made after the whole.

On this occasion give me leave to remark, that of all the vast quantities of goods we have sent you by many different vessels since my being in France, we never were happy enough to receive the least scrip of acknowledgment that they had ever come to hand, except from Mr. Langdon, of a cargo arrived at Portsmouth, and, I think, of one more. This is doubtless owing to the interruption our correspondence has met with, and not altogether to neglect. But as such advices of receipt may be made in short letters, it would be well to send more copies. The following is a matter of less importance. It is two years, I believe, since I sent the monument of General Montgomery. I have heard that the vessel arrived in North Carolina, but nothing more. I should be glad to know of its coming to hand, and whether it is approved. Here it was admired for the goodness and beauty of the marble, and the elegant simplicity of the design. The sculptor has had an engraving made of it, of which I enclose a copy. It was contrived to be affixed to the wall within some church, or in the great room where the Congress met. Directions for putting it up went with it. All the parts were well packed in strong cases.

With the greatest respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *October 28th.* I kept the packet in hopes of sending a more explicit account of what might be expected in regard to the supplies. The express which was daily expected from Spain, when I began this letter, arrived but a few days since. I am now informed that Court is understood to be in treaty with the Congress in America to furnish a sum of hard money there, and on that account excuses itself from sharing in the expense of furnishing these supplies. This

has a little deranged the measures intended to be taken here, and I am now told that the whole quantity of goods demanded can hardly be furnished, but that, as soon as the Court returns from Marly, the Ministers will consult and do the best they can for us. The arms, I hear, are in hand at Charleville. I am unwilling to keep the packet any longer, lest she should arrive on our coasts too far in the winter, and be blown off. I therefore send away the despatches; but if I have the result of the council in time to reach her by post, I will send it in a separate letter. The hearty good will of the Ministry may be depended on; but it must be remembered that their present expenses are enormous.

B. F.

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TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, October 17th, 1779.

Sir,

The foregoing is a copy of my last. I have now before me your several favors therein mentioned, viz: of June 13th, July 9th and 16th, and August 6th. I received the Journals of Congress from January 1st to June 12th, which you took care to send me; but the volumes 1 and 2 which you mention are not yet come to hand. I hear they are at Madrid. I know not how they came there, nor well how to get them from thence. Perhaps you can easier send me another set.

As I hear of the arrival of the Chevalier de la Luzerne, by whom I wrote a long letter to your Committee, I presume you have received it, and that it is not necessary to send more copies. By this opportunity I write largely to the President. You ask, "Will no one, under a commission from the United States," &c. Enclosed I send you a copy of the instructions I gave to Commodore Jones, when it was intended to send with him some transports and troops to make descents in England.\* Had not the scheme been altered by a general one of a grand invasion I know he would have endeavored to put some considerable towns to a high ransom, or have burnt them. He sailed without the troops, but he nevertheless would have attempted Leith, and went into the Firth of Edinburgh with that intention, but a sudden hard gale of wind forced him out again.

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\* See p. 56 of the present volume.

The late provocations, by the burning of Fairfield and other towns, added to the preceding, have at length demolished all my moderation; and, were such another expedition to be concerted, I think so much of that disposition would not appear in the instructions. But I see so many inconveniences in mixing the two nations together that I cannot encourage any further proposal of the kind. This has ended better than I expected, and yet a mortal difference has arisen between Captains Jones and Landais, that makes me very uneasy about the consequences. I send you the journal of the cruise.

I am glad to understand that Congress will appoint some person here to audit our accounts. Mine will give but little trouble, and I wish much to have them settled; and, for the future, I hope I shall have none to settle but what relate to my expenses.

The quarrel you mention, between Mr. Deane and Mr. Lee, I have never meddled with, and have no intention to take any part in it whatever. I had, and have still, a very good opinion of Mr. Deane, for his zeal and activity in the service of his country; I also thought him a man of integrity. But if he has embezzled public money, or traded with it on his private account, or employed it in stock-jobbing, all which, I understand, he is charged with, I give him up. As yet, I think him innocent. But he and his accusers are able to plead their own causes, and time will show what we ought to think of them.

I send you with this a piece written by a learned friend of mine, on the taxation of free States, which I imagine may give you some pleasure; also, a late royal edict for abolishing the remains of slavery in this kingdom. Who would have thought, a few years since, that we should live to see a King of France giving freedom to slaves, while a King of England is endeavoring to make slaves of freemen?

There is much talk all over Europe of an approaching peace by the mediation of Russia and Holland. I have no information of it to be depended on, and believe we ought to lay our account on another campaign, for which I hope you will receive in time the supplies demanded. Nothing is wanting on my part to forward them; and I have the satisfaction to assure you that I do not find the regard of this Court for the Congress and its servants in any respect diminished. We have just heard from Norway that two of the most valuable prizes taken by the Alliance, Captain Landais, in the squadron of Commodore Jones, are safe arrived at Bergen, viz: the ship from

London to Quebec, laden with naval stores, and that from Liverpool to New York and Jamaica. They were letters of marque, of twenty-two guns and eighty-four men each. I wish we may get them safe to America. The squadron itself is got into Holland, with the two prize men of war, where they are all refitting. Great damage has been done to the English coal-trade, and four hundred prisoners have been taken, which will more than redeem the rest of our people from their captivity in England, if we can get them safe from Holland to France; but I suppose the English will endeavor to intercept us, and recover their ships, if possible.

With great esteem for yourself and the Committee, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO R. BERNSTORF, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN DENMARK.

Passy, December 22d, 1779.

Sir,

I have received a letter from M. de Chezaulx, Consul of France at Bergen in Norway, acquainting me that two ships, viz: the *Betsy* and the *Union*, prizes taken from the English on their coasts by Captain Landais, commader of the *Alliance* frigate, appertaining to the United States of North America, which prizes having met with bad weather at sea, that had damaged their rigging, and had occasioned leaks, and been weakly manned, had taken shelter in the supposed neutral port of Bergen, in order to repair their damages, procure an additional number of sailors, and the necessary refreshments; that they were the said port enjoying, as they conceived, the common rights of hospitality, established and practised by civilized nations under the care of the above said Consul, when, on the 28th of October last, the said ships, with their cargoes and papers, were suddenly seized by officers of his Majesty the King of Denmark, to whom the said port belongs; the American officers and seamen turned out of their possession, and the whole delivered to the English Consul.

M. de Chezaulx has also sent me the following as a translation of his Majesty's order, by which the above proceedings are said to be authorised, viz: "The English Minister having insisted on the restitution of two vessels, which had been taken by the American privateer called the *Alliance*, commanded by Captain Landais, and

which were brought into Bergen, viz: the *Betsy* of Liverpool, and the *Union* of London, his Majesty has granted this demand on this account, because he has not as yet acknowledged the independence of the Colonies associated against England, and because that these vessels for this reason cannot be considered as good and lawful prizes. Therefore, the said two ships shall be immediately liberated and allowed to depart with their cargoes." By a subsequent letter from the same Consul, I am informed that a third prize belonging to the United States, viz: the *Charming Polly*, which arrived at Bergen after the others, has also been seized and delivered up in the same manner; and that all the people of the three vessels, after being thus stripped of their property, (for every one had an interest in the prizes,) were turned on shore to shift for themselves, without money, in a strange place, no provision being made for their subsistence, or for sending them back to their country.

Permit me, sir, to observe, on this occasion, that the United States of America have no war but with the English; that they have never done any injury to other nations, particularly none to the Danish nation; on the contrary, they are in some degree its benefactors, as they have opened a trade of which the English made a monopoly, and of which the Danes may now have their share, and by dividing the British Empire have made it less dangerous to its neighbors. They conceived that every nation whom they had not offended was, by the rights of humanity, their friend; they confided in the hospitality of Denmark, and thought themselves and their property safe when under the roof of his Danish Majesty. But they find themselves stripped of that property, and the same given up to their enemies, on this principle only, that no acknowledgment had yet been formally made by Denmark of the independence of the United States; which is to say, that there is no obligation of justice towards any nation with whom a treaty, promising the same, has not been previously made. This was indeed the doctrine of ancient barbarians, a doctrine long since exploded, and which it would not be for the honor of the present age to revive; and it is hoped that Denmark will not, by supporting and persisting in this decision, obtained of his Majesty apparently by surprise, be the first modern nation that shall attempt to revive it.\*

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\* "The ancients," says Vattel, "did not conceive themselves bound under any



The United States, oppressed by and at war with one of the most powerful nations of Europe, may well be supposed incapable, in their present infant state, of exacting justice from other nations not disposed to grant it; but it is in human nature that injuries as well as benefits received in times of weakness and distress, national as well as personal, make deep and lasting impressions; and those Ministers are wise who look into futurity and quench the first sparks of misunderstanding between two nations, which, neglected, may in time grow into a flame, all the consequences whereof no human prudence can foresee, which may produce much mischief to both, and cannot possibly produce any good to either. I beg leave, through your Excellency, to submit these considerations to the wisdom and justice of his Danish Majesty, who I infinitely respect, and who, I hope, will reconsider and repeal the orders above recited, and that, if the prizes which I hereby reclaim in behalf of the United States of America, are not actually gone to England, they may be stopped and redelivered to M. de Chezaulx, the Consul of France at Bergen, in whose care they before were, with liberty to depart for America when the season shall permit. But if they should be already gone to England, I must then claim from his Majesty's equity the value of the said prizes, which is estimated at fifty thousand pounds sterling, but which may be regulated by the best information that can by any means be obtained.

With the greatest respect, I am, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, February 2d, 1780.

Dear Friend,

It is some time since I procured the discharge of your Captain

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obligation towards a people with whom they were not connected by a treaty of friendship. At length the voice of nature was heard by civilized nations; they acknowledged all mankind as brothers." An injustice of the same kind, done a century or two since by some English in the East Indies, Grotius tells us, "was not without its partisans, who maintained that, by the ancient laws of England, no one was liable to punishment in that kingdom for outrages committed against foreigners, when no treaty of alliance had been contracted with them." But this principle he condemns in the strongest terms.—*History of the Troubles in the Netherlands, Book 16th.*

Stephenson. He did not call here in his way home. I hope he arrived safely, and had a happy meeting with his friends and family.

I have long postponed answering your letter of the 29th of June. A principal point in it, on which you seemed to desire my opinion, was, the conduct you thought America ought to hold in case her allies should, from motives of ambition or resentment of former injuries, desire her to continue the war beyond what should be reasonable and consistent with her particular interests. As often as I took up your letter in order to answer it, this suggestion displeased me, and I laid it down again. I saw no occasion for discussing such a question at present, nor any good end it could serve to discuss it before the case should happen; and I saw inconveniences in discussing it. I wish, therefore, you had not mentioned it. For the rest, I am as much for peace as ever I was, and as heartily desirous of seeing the war ended as I was to prevent its beginning; of which your Ministers know I gave a strong proof before I left England, when, in order to an accommodation, I offered at my own risk, without orders for so doing, and without knowing whether I should be owned in doing it, to pay the whole damage of destroying the tea at Boston, provided the acts made against that Province were repealed. This offer was refused. I still think it would have been wise to have accepted it. If the Congress have, therefore, entrusted to others rather than to me the negociations for peace, when such shall be set on foot, as has been reported, it is perhaps because they may have heard of a very singular opinion of mine, that there hardly ever existed such a thing as a bad peace, or a good war; and that I might, therefore, easily be induced to make improper concessions. But, at the same time, they and you may be assured that I should think the destruction of our whole country, and the extirpation of our whole people, preferable to the infamy of abandoning our allies.

As neither you nor I are, at present, authorised to treat of peace, 'it seems to little purpose to make or consider propositions relating to it. I have had so many such put into my hands, that I am tired of them. I will, however, give your proposal of a ten years' truce this answer, that, though I think a solid peace made at once a much better thing, yet, if the truce is practicable, and the peace not, I should be for agreeing to it. At least I see, at present, no sufficient

reasons for refusing it, provided our allies approve of it. But this is merely a private opinion of mine, which, perhaps, may be changed by reasons that, at present, do not offer themselves. This, however, I am clear in, that withdrawing your troops will be best for you, if you wish a cordial reconciliation, and that the truce should produce a peace. To show that it was not done by compulsion—being required as a condition of the truce—they might be withdrawn beforehand, for various good reasons. But all this is idle chat, as I am persuaded that there is no disposition for peace on your side, and that this war will yet last many years. I know nothing, and believe nothing of any terms offered to Sir Henry Clinton.

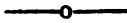
The prisoners taken in the *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough*, being all treated for in Holland, and exchanged there, I hope Mr. Brown's son is now safe at home with his father. It grieved me that the exchange there, which you may remember I immediately proposed, was so long delayed. Much human misery might have been prevented by a prompt compliance; and so might a great deal by the execution of parole promises taken at sea; but since I see no regard is paid to them in England, I must give orders to our armed ships that cruise in Europe to secure their prisoners as well as they can, and lodge them in French or Spanish prisons. I have written something on this affair to Mr. Hodgson, and sent to him the second passport for a cartel to Morlaix, supposing you to be out of town. The number of prisoners we now have in France is not easily ascertained. I suppose it exceeds one hundred; yet you may be assured that the number which may be brought over by the two cartels shall be fully exchanged, by adding to those taken by us as many as will make up the complement out of those taken by the French, with whom we have an account since the exchange in Holland of those we carried in there. I wish, therefore, you would, as was proposed, clear your prisons of the Americans who have been so long confined there. The cartels that may arrive at Morlaix will not be detained.

You may have heard that accounts upon oath have been taken in America, by order of Congress, of the British barbarities committed there. It is expected of me to make a school book of them, and to have thirty-five prints designed here by good artists, and engraved, each expressing one or more of the different horrid facts, to be inserted in the book, in order to impress the minds of children and

posterity with a deep sense of your bloody and insatiable malice and wickedness. Every kindness I hear of done by an Englishman to an American prisoner makes me resolve not to proceed in the work, hoping a reconciliation may yet take place. But every fresh instance of your devilism weakens that resolution, and makes me abominate the thought of a reunion with such a people. You, my friend, have often persuaded me, and I believed it, that the war was not theirs nor approved by them. But their suffering it so long to continue, and the wretched rulers to remain who carry it on, makes me think you have too good an opinion of them.

Adieu, my dear friend, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Sir,

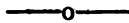
Philadelphia, February 24th, 1780.

I forward the gazettes to Boston for you, as usual, without knowing when they will find a passage from thence. Your letters of September the 30th, and one from Arthur Lee of December the 8th, came to hand two days ago, your prior being May the 26th, received August the 17th. I hope you have got newspapers from me often, though I have written few letters. The Commercial Committee is impressed with your sentiments respecting drafts. They are a mere name at present. I hope that branch will, for a time, be conducted by the Admiralty Board, till a new arrangement can be formed, to be executed by persons not members of Congress. We are about calling on the States according to their staples, so that the prospect of suitable remittances is enlarged. This plan is consequent upon a resolve of December the 14th.

I am, with great respect, sir, &c.,

JAMES LOVELL.

P. S. The Chevalier de la Luzerne expressed to me anxiety because we do not correspond in cypher. I early communicated to you from Baltimore a very good one, though a little tedious, like that of M. Dumas. I enclose you a sample at this time.



TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Sir,

Passy, March 4th, 1780.

M. Gerard, under whose care I understand the despatches from

Congress to me were forwarded, is not yet arrived here, and I have not received them. I cannot, therefore, at present answer any thing that may be contained in them. He is, however, expected next week, and I may afterwards have time to write further by the Alliance. Mr. Adams is come, but did not bring duplicates of those despatches. I have, in obedience to the order of Congress, which he produced to me, furnished him with one thousand louis d'ors. I have also given a credit to Mr. Jay upon the correspondent of our banker at Madrid for an equal sum. I have not yet heard of his arrival there. His letter to me was from Cadiz, of the 28th of January.

In my last I gave some account of the success of our little squadron under Commodore Jones. Three of their prizes sent into Bergen, in Norway, were at the instance of the British Minister seized by order of the Court of Denmark, and delivered up to him. I have, with the approbation of the Ministry here, drawn up and sent to that Court a memorial reclaiming those prizes. It went through the hands of the French Minister residing there, who has delivered it; but I have yet no answer. I understand from the French Consul at Bergen, that the prizes remain still in that port, and it is said there is some hope that the order may be reversed, but this is doubtful; and I suppose the Congress will immediately consider this important affair, and give me such instructions upon it as they may judge proper. With this I send a copy of the memorial.

During the cruise a mortal quarrel took place between the Commodore and Captain Landais. On their arrival in Holland, M. de Sartine, Minister of the Marine, proposed to me the sending for Landais, in order to inquire into his conduct. I doubted the propriety of my meddling in the affair, but Captain Landais's friends conceiving it a measure that might be serviceable to him, and pressing it, I complied, and he came accordingly to Paris. I send the minutes of the inquiry for the consideration of Congress. I have not presumed to condemn or acquit him, doubting as well my own judgment as my authority. He proposes to demand a court-martial in America. In his absence from the ship, the Commodore took the command of her, and on quitting the Texel made a cruise through the channel to Spain, and is since returned to L'Orient, where the ship is now refitting in order to return to America. Captain Landais has not applied to me to be replaced in her, and I imagine has no

thought of that kind, having before on several occasions expressed to me and others his dissatisfaction with his officers, and his inclination on that account to quit her. Captain Jones will therefore carry her home, unless he should be prevailed with to enter another service, which, however, I think is not likely, though he has gained immense reputation all over Europe for his bravery.

As vessels of war under my care create me a vast deal of business, (of a kind, too, that I am unexperienced in, and, by my distance from the coast, is very difficult to be well executed,) I must repeat my earnest request that some person of skill in such affairs may be appointed, in the character of consul, to take charge of them. I imagine that much would by that means be saved in the expense of their various refittings and supplies, which to me appears enormous.

Agreeable to the order of Congress, I have employed one of the best artists here in cutting the dies for the medal intended for M. de Fleury. The price of such work is beyond my expectation, being a thousand livres for each die. I shall try if it is not possible to have the others done cheaper.

Our exchange of prisoners has been for some time past at a stand, the English Admiralty refusing, after long consideration, to give us any men in return for those who had been dismissed by our armed vessels on parole, and the actual prisoners we had being all exchanged. When the squadron of Commodore Jones arrived in the Texel with five hundred English prisoners, I proposed exchanging there; but this was declined, in expectation, as I heard from England, of retaking them in their way to France. The stay of our ships in Holland, through the favor of the States, being prolonged, and the squadrons stationed to intercept us being tired of cruising for us, the British Ministry consented, at length, to a cartel with France, and brought Frenchmen to Holland to exchange for those prisoners instead of Americans. These proceedings have occasioned our poor people to be kept longer in confinement; but the Minister of the Marine having given orders that I should have as many English, another cartel charged with Americans is now daily expected, and I hope in a few months to see them all at liberty. This for their sakes, and also to save expense; for their long and hard imprisonment induces many to hazard attempts of escaping; and those who get away through London and Holland, and come to Paris in

their way to some sea-port in France, cost one with another, I believe, near twenty pounds sterling a head.

The delays in the exchange have, I think, been lengthened by the Admiralty, partly with the view of breaking the patience of our people, and inducing them to enter the English service. They have spared no pains for this purpose, and have prevailed with some. The number of these has not, indeed, been great, and several of them lost their lives in the blowing up of the Quebec. I am also lately informed, from London, that the flags of truce with prisoners from Boston, one of which is seized as British property, will obtain no Americans in exchange; the returned English being told that they had no authority or right to make such agreements with rebels, &c. This is not the only instance in which it appears that a few late successes have given that nation another *hour of insolence*; and yet their affairs, upon the whole, wear a very unpromising aspect. They have not yet been able to find any allies in Europe. Holland grows daily less and less disposed to comply with their requisitions; Ireland is not satisfied, but is making new demands; Scotland, and the Protestants in England, are uneasy; and the associations of counties in England, with committees of correspondence to make reforms in the Government, all taken together, give a good deal of apprehension at present, even to their mad Ministers; while their debt, on the point of amounting to the amazing sum of two hundred millions, hangs as a millstone upon the neck of their credit, and must, ere long, sink it beyond redemption.

The disposition of this Court continues as favorable as ever, though it cannot comply with all our demands. The supplies required in the invoice sent me by the Committee appeared too great and numerous to be immediately furnished. Three millions of livres were, however, granted me, with which, after deducting what will be necessary to pay the interest bills, and other late drafts of Congress, I could not venture on ordering more than ten thousand suits of clothes. With these, we shall have fifteen thousand arms and accoutrements. A good deal of the cloth goes over in the Alliance, purchased by Mr. Ross, which, it is computed, may make seven or eight thousand suits more. But although we have not obtained that invoice of goods, this Court being at immense expense in the preparations for the next campaign, I have reason to believe

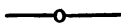
that a part of those preparations will be employed in essential assistance to the United States, and I hope effectual, though at present I cannot be more particular.

I have sent to Mr. Johnson the vote of Congress relative to the settlement of the accounts. He has expressed his readiness to enter on the service. Mr. Deane is soon expected here, whose presence is very necessary, and I hope with his help they may be gone through without much difficulty. I could have wished it had suited Mr. Lee to have been here at the same time.

The Marquis de la Fayette, who, during his residence in France, has been extremely zealous in supporting our cause on all occasions, returns again to fight for it. He is infinitely esteemed and beloved here, and I am persuaded will do every thing in his power to merit a continuance of the same affection from America.

With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



FROM R. BERNSTORF, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN DENMARK, TO  
B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Copenhagen, March 8th, 1780.

Sir,

Were you a person less known and respected, I should have been quite at a loss on the subject of the letter which I have had the honor of receiving from you, which did not come to hand till the 31st of January. I should have considered it as a measure calculated to place us under a new embarrassment, as painful as the first; but there is no fear nor risk with such a sage as you are, sir, generally respected by that universe which you have enlightened, and known for that prevailing love for truth which characterises the good man and the true philosopher. These are the titles which will transmit your name to the remotest posterity, and in which I am particularly interested at the time when the situation of affairs imposes on me the necessity of divesting myself of every public character in writing to you, and only to aspire at appearing to you what I truly am, the passionate friend of peace, truth, and merit.

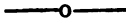
VOL. II.—7



This mode of thinking not only decides my personal sentiments with respect to you, but also those I have respecting the unfortunate affair which you have thought fit to mention to me, and which, from its commencement, has given me the utmost pain. You will readily agree with me, sir, in granting that there are perplexing situations in which it is impossible to avoid displeasing one party. You are too equitable not to enter into ours. There would be no consolation in such cases, nor would the persons who have been led into them ever be forgiven, were it not that opportunities sometimes present themselves of being heard, and preventing in future such essential embarrassments.

The Baron de Blome will speak to you in confidence, and with the utmost freedom on this subject, and if my wishes can be accomplished I shall be recompensed for all my pains, and there will only remain the agreeable recollection of having had the satisfaction of assuring you, from under my hand, of that superior and perfect esteem with which I have the honor of being, sir, &c.,

R. BERNSTORF.



TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, March 16th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

The Marquis de la Fayette, our firm and constant friend, returning to America, I have written a long letter by him to the President, of which a copy goes by this ship. M. Gerard is since arrived, and I have received the despatches you mentioned to me, but no letter in answer to mine, a very long one, by the Chevalier de la Luzerne, nor any acknowledgment that it came to hand.

By the many newspapers and pamphlets I send, you will see the present state of European affairs in general. Ireland continues to insist on complete liberty, and will probably obtain it. The meetings of counties in England, and the committees of correspondence they appoint, alarm a good deal the Ministry, especially since it has been proposed to elect out of each committee a few persons to assemble in London, which, if carried into execution, will form a kind of Congress that will have more of the confidence and support of the people than the old Parliament. If the nation is not too corrupt, as I rather think it is, some considerable reformation of internal abuses may be expected

from this. With regard to us, the only advantage to be reasonably expected from it is a peace, the general bent of the nation being for it.

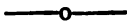
The success of Admiral Rodney's fleet against our allies, has a little elated our enemies for the present, and probably they will not now think of proposing it. If the approaching campaign, for which great preparations are making here, should end disadvantageously to them, they will be more treatable, for their debts and taxes are daily becoming more burthensome, while their commerce, the source of their wealth, diminishes, and though they have flattered themselves with obtaining assistance from Russia and other Powers, it does not appear they are likely to succeed; on the contrary, they are in danger of losing the neutrality of Holland.

Their conduct with regard to the exchange of prisoners has been very unjust. After long suspense and affected delays for the purpose of wearing out our poor people, they have finally refused to deliver us a man in exchange for those set at liberty by our cruisers on parole. A letter, which I enclose from Captain Mitchell, will show the treatment of the late flags of truce from Boston. There is no gaining any thing from these barbarians by advances of civility or humanity.

Enclosed I send for Congress the justification of this Court against the accusation published in the late English memorials.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO JOSEPH REED, PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Pussy, March 19th, 1780.

Sir,

I have just received the pamphlet you did me the honor to send me by M. Gerard, and have read it with pleasure. Not only as the clear state of facts it does you honor, but as it proves the falsehood of a man, who also showed no regard to truth in what he said of me, "*that I approved of the propositions he carried over.*" The truth is this: His brother, Mr. Pultney, came here with those propositions; and after stipulating, that if I did not approve of them, I should not speak of them to any person, he communicated them to me. I told him frankly, on his desiring to know my sentiments, that

I DID NOT approve of them, and that I was sure they would NOT be accepted in America. But, I said, there are two other Commissioners here; I will, if you please, show your propositions to them, and you will hear their opinions. I will also show them to the Ministry here, without whose knowledge and concurrence we can take no step in such affairs. No, said he, as you do not approve of them, it can answer no purpose to show them to anybody else; the reasons that weigh with you will also weigh with them; therefore I now pray that no mention may be made of my having been here, or my business. To this I agreed, and therefore nothing could be more astonishing to me than to see in an American newspaper, that direct lie, in a letter from Mr. Johnstone, joined with two other falsehoods relating to the time of the treaty, and to the opinion of Spain!

In proof of the above I enclose a certificate of a friend of Mr. Pultney's, the only person present at our interview;\* and I do it the rather at this time, because I am informed that another calumniator (the same who formerly in his private letters to particular members, accused you, with Messrs. Jay, Duane, Langdon, and Harrison, of betraying the secrets of Congress in a correspondence

\* TO B. FRANKLIN.

Dear Sir,

I send you adjoined the certificate you desire, and am perfectly convinced, from conversations I have since had with Mr. Pultney, that nobody was authorised to hold the language which has been imputed to him on that subject; and as I have a high opinion of his candor and worth, I know it must be painful to him to be brought into question in matters of fact with persons he esteems. I could wish that this matter may receive no further publicity than what is necessary for your justification. I am, &c.,

W. ALEXANDER.

PARIS, March 19th, 1780.

I do hereby certify whom it may concern, that I was with Mr. Pultney and Dr. Franklin at Paris, when in a conversation between them on the subject of certain propositions for a reconciliation with America, offered by Mr. Pultney, Dr. Franklin said, he did not approve of them, nor did he think they would be approved in America, but that he would communicate them to his colleagues and the French Ministry. This Mr. Pultney opposed, saying that it would answer no good end, as he was persuaded, that what weighed with Dr. Franklin would weigh also with them; and therefore desired that no mention might be made of his having offered such propositions, or even of his having been here on such business; but that the whole might be buried in oblivion, agreeable to what had been stipulated by Mr. Pultney, and agreed to by Dr. Franklin, before the propositions were produced; which Dr. Franklin accordingly promised.

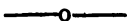
W. ALEXANDER.

with the Ministry) has made this transaction with Mr. Pultney an article of accusation against me, as having approved the same propositions. He proposes, I understand, to settle in your Government. I caution you to beware of him; for in sowing suspicions and jealousies, in creating misunderstandings and quarrels among friends, in malice, subtlety, and indefatigable industry, he has I think no equal.

I am glad to see that you continue to preside in our new State, as it shows that your public conduct is approved by the people. You have had a difficult time, which required abundance of prudence, and you have been equal to the occasion. The disputes about the Constitution seem to have subsided. It is much admired here, and all over Europe, and will draw over many families of fortune to settle under it, as soon as there is a peace. The defects that may, on seven years' trial, be found in it can be amended when the time comes for considering them.

With great and sincere esteem and respect I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, May 11th, 1780.

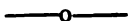
Sir,

The Baron de Goltz has warmly entreated me to recommend to you the Baron d'Arendt, a Prussian officer in the service of the United States. I the more readily acquiesce in satisfying his demand, as you will certainly take a pleasure in obliging this Minister as far as in your power.

The Baron d'Arendt will himself explain the different matters in which he thinks he wants your aid with Congress.

I have the honor of being, with great sincerity, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



TO THE JUDGES OF THE ADMIRALTY AT CHERBOURG.

Passy, May 16th, 1780.

Gentlemen,

I have received the *procès verbaux* and other papers you did me

the honor to send me, agreeable to the 11th article of the regulation of the 27th of September, 1778. These pieces relate to the taking of the ship *Flora*, whereof was captain Henry Roodenberg, bound from Rotterdam to Dublin, and arrived at Cherbourg, in France, being taken the 7th day of April, by Captain Dowlin, commander of the American privateer the *Black Prince*.

It appears to me, from the above mentioned papers, that the said ship *Flora* is not a good prize, the same belonging to the subjects of a neutral nation; but that the cargo is really the property of the subjects of the King of England, though attempted to be masked as neutral. I do, therefore, request that, after the cargo shall be landed, you would cause the said ship *Flora* to be immediately restored to her captain, and that you would oblige the captors to pay him his full freight according to his bills of lading, and also to make good all the damages he may have sustained by plunder or otherwise; and I further request that, as the cargo is perishable, you would cause it to be sold immediately, and retain the produce deposited in your hands, to the end that if any of the freighters, being subjects of their High Mightinesses the States-General, will declare upon oath, that certain parts of the said cargo were *bona fide* shipped on their own account and risk, and not on the account and risk of any British or Irish subjects, the value of such parts may be restored; or, that if the freighters, or any of them, should think fit to appeal from this judgment to the Congress, the produce so deposited may be disposed of according to their final determination.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, May 22d, 1780.

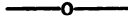
Sir,

The Baron d'Arendt, colonel in the armies of the United States, having expressed to me a desire of returning to the service in America, though not entirely cured of his wound which occasioned his voyage to Europe, I endeavored to dissuade him from the undertaking. But he having procured a letter to me from M. de Vergennes, of which I send your Excellency a copy herewith, I have been induced to advance him twenty-five louis d'ors towards

enabling him to proceed. To justify his long absence, he intends laying before Congress some letters from William Lee, which he thinks will be sufficient for that purpose.

With great respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO AN AGENT OF AMERICAN CRUISERS.

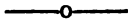
Passy, May 30th, 1780.

Sir,

In my last, of the 27th instant, I omitted one thing I had intended, viz: to desire you would give absolute orders to your cruisers not to bring in any more Dutch vessels, though charged with enemy's goods, unless contraband. All the neutral States of Europe seem at present disposed to change what had before been deemed the law of nations, to wit: that an enemy's property may be taken wherever found, and to establish a rule that free ships shall make free goods. This rule is itself so reasonable, and of a nature to be so beneficial to mankind, that I cannot but wish it may become general. And I make no doubt but that the Congress will agree to it in as full an extent as France and Spain. In the mean time, and until I have received their orders on the subject, it is my intention to condemn no more English goods found in Dutch vessels, unless contraband, of which I thought it right to give you this previous notice, that you may avoid the trouble and expense likely to arise from such captures, and from the detention of them for a decision.

With great regard, and best wishes for the success of your enterprise, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, May 31st, 1780.

Sir,

I wrote to your Excellency the 4th of March past, to go by this ship, the Alliance, then expected to sail immediately. But the men refusing to go till paid their share of prize money, and sundry difficulties arising with regard to the sale and division, she has been detained thus long, to my great mortification, and I am yet uncertain when I shall be able to get her out. The trouble and vexation

which these maritime affairs give me, is inconceivable. I have often expressed to Congress my wish to be relieved from them, and that some person better acquainted with them, and better situated, might be appointed to manage them; much money, as well as time, would, I am sure, be saved by such an appointment.

The Alliance is to carry some of the cannon long since ordered, and as much of the powder, arms, and clothing, (furnished by Government here,) as she, together with a frigate, the Ariel, we have borrowed, can take. I hope they may between them take the whole, with what has been provided by Mr. Ross. This gentleman has, by what I can learn, served the Congress well in the quality and prices of the goods he has purchased. I wish it had been in my power to discharge his balance here, for which he has 'importuned me rather too much. We furnished him with about twenty thousand pounds sterling to discharge his first accounts, which he was to replace as soon as he received remittances from the Committee of Commerce. This has not been done, and he now demands another nearly equal sum, urging as before that the credit of the States as well as his own will be hurt by my refusal.

Mr. Bingham, too, complains of me for refusing some of his drafts, as very hurtful to his credit, though he owns he had no orders from Congress to authorise those drafts. I never undertook to provide for more than the payment of the interest bills of the first loan. The Congress have drawn on me very considerably for other purposes, which has sometimes greatly embarrassed me, but I have duly accepted and found means to pay their drafts; so that their credit in Europe has been well supported. But if every agent of Congress in different parts of the world is permitted to run in debt, and draw upon me at pleasure to support his credit, under the idea of its being necessary to do so for the honor of Congress, the difficulty upon me would be too great, and I may in fine be obliged to protest the interest bills. I therefore beg that a stop may be put to such irregular proceedings.

Had the loans proposed to be made in Europe succeeded, these practices might not have been so inconvenient; but the number of agents from separate States running all over Europe, and asking to borrow money, has given such an idea of our distress and poverty, as makes every body afraid to trust us. I am much pleased to find that Congress has at length resolved to borrow of our own people.

by making their future bills bear interest. This interest duly paid in hard money, to such as require hard money, will fix the value of the principal, and even make the payment of the interest in hard money for the most part unnecessary, provided always that the quantity of principal be not excessive.

A great clamor has lately been made here by some merchants, who say they have large sums in their hands of paper money in America, and that they are ruined by some resolution of Congress, which reduces its value to one part in forty. As I have had no letter explaining this matter, I have only been able to say, that it is probably misunderstood, and that I am confident the Congress have not done, nor will do, any thing unjust towards strangers who have given us credit. I have, indeed, been almost ready to complain that I hear so little and so seldom from Congress, or from the Committee of Correspondence; but I know the difficulty of communication, and the frequent interruption it meets in this time of war. I have not yet received a line this year, and the letters written by the Confederacy—as I suppose some must have been written by her—have not yet come to hand.

I mentioned, in a former letter, my having communicated to Mr. Johnson, of Nantes, the order of Congress appointing him to examine the account, and his acceptance of the appointment. Nothing, however, has yet been done in pursuance of it; for Mr. Deane having written that he might be expected here by the middle of March, and as his presence would be very useful in explaining the mercantile transactions, I have waited his arrival to request Mr. Johnson's coming to Paris, that his detention here from his affairs at Nantes might be as short as possible. Mr. Deane is not yet come; but as we have heard of the arrival of the *Fendant* in Martinique, in which ship he took his passage, we imagine he may be here in some of the first ships from that island.

The medal for M. de Fleury is done, and delivered to his order—he being absent. I shall get the others prepared as soon as possible by the same hand, if I cannot find a cheaper equally good, which I am now inquiring after. Two thousand livres appear to me a great sum for the work.

With my last I sent a copy of my memorial to the Court of Denmark. I have since received an answer from the Minister of that Court for Foreign Affairs, a copy of which I enclose. It



referred me to the Danish Minister here, with whom I have had a conference on the subject. He was full of professions of the good will of his Court to the United States, and would excuse the delivery of our prizes to the English, as done in conformity to treaties, which it was necessary to observe. He had not the treaty to show me, and I have not been able to find such a treaty on inquiry. After my memorial, our people left at Bergen were treated with the greatest kindness by an order from Court, their expenses during the winter that they had been detained there all paid, necessaries furnished to them for their voyage to Dunkirk, and a passage thither found for them, all at the King's expense. I have not dropped the application for a restitution, but shall continue to push it, not without some hopes of success. I wish, however, to receive instructions relating to it, and I think a letter from Congress to that Court might forward the business; for I believe they are sensible they have done wrong, and are apprehensive of the inconveniences that may follow. With this I send the protests taken at Bergen against the proceeding.

The Alliance, in her last cruise, met with and sent to America a Dutch ship, supposed to have on board an English cargo. The owners have made application to me. I have assured them that they might depend on the justice of our courts; and that if they could prove their property there, it would be restored. M. Dumas has written to me about it. I enclose his letter, and wish despatch may be given to the business, as well to prevent the inconveniences of a misunderstanding with Holland, as for the sake of justice.

A ship of that nation has been brought in here by the Black Prince, having an English cargo. I consulted with Messrs. Adams and Dana, who informed me that it was an established rule with us, in such cases, to confiscate the cargo, but to release the ship, paying her freight, &c. This I have accordingly ordered in the case of this ship, and hope it may be satisfactory. But it is a critical time with respect to such cases, for whatever may formerly have been the law of nations, all the neutral Powers, at the instance of Russia, seem at present disposed to change it and to enforce the rule that *free ships shall make free goods*, except in the case of contraband. Denmark, Sweden, and Holland, have already acceded to the proposition, and Portugal is expected to follow. France and Spain, in their answers, have also expressed their approbation of it. I have

therefore instructed our privateers to bring in no more neutral ships, as such prizes occasion much litigation and create ill blood.

The Alliance, Captain Landais, took two Swedes in coming hither, who demand of us for damages, one, upward of sixty thousand livres, and the other near five hundred pounds sterling; and I cannot well see how the demand is to be settled. In the newspapers that I send the Congress will see authentic pieces expressing the sense of the European Powers on the subject of neutral navigation. I hope to receive the sense of Congress for my future government, and for the satisfaction of the neutral nations now entering into the confederacy, which is considered here as a great stroke against England. In truth, that country seems to have no friends on this side of the water; no other nation wishes it success in its present war, but rather desires to see it effectually humbled; no one, not even their old friends, the Dutch, will afford them any assistance. Such is the mischievous effects of pride, insolence, and injustice on the affairs of nations, as well as on those of private persons!

The English party in Holland is daily diminishing, and the States are arming vigorously to maintain the freedom of their navigation. The consequence may possibly be a war with England, or a serious disposition in that mad nation to save what they can by a timely peace.

Our cartel for the exchange of American prisoners has been some time at a stand. When our little squadron brought near five hundred into Holland, England would not at first exchange Americans for them there, expecting to take them in their passage to France. But at length an agreement was made between the English and French Ambassadors, and I was persuaded to give them up, on a promise of having an equal number of English delivered to my order at Morlaix. So those were exchanged for Frenchmen. But the English now refuse to take any English in exchange for Americans that have not been taken by American cruisers. They also refuse to send me any Americans in exchange for their prisoners released and sent home by the two flags of truce from Boston. Thus they give up all pretensions to equity and honor, and govern themselves by caprice, passion, and transient views of present interest.

Be pleased to present my duty to Congress, and believe me to be, with great respect, your Excellency's &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

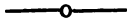
TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, June 1st, 1780.

Sir,

Commodore Jones, who, by his bravery and conduct has done great honor to the American flag, desires to have that also of presenting a line to the hands of your Excellency. I cheerfully comply with his request, in recommending him to the notice of Congress, and to your Excellency's protection, though his actions are a more effectual recommendation, and render any from me unnecessary. It gives me, however, an opportunity of showing my readiness to do justice to merit, and of professing the esteem and respect with which I am your Excellency's, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO C. W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, June 5th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

The gentleman whose name you wished to know, in one of your late letters, is *M. Westhuysen, Echevin et Conseiller de la Ville de Harlem*. I shall probably send an order to that place for some of the types, of which you have sent me the prices, *before I leave Europe*. I think them very good, and not dear.

A Dutch ship, belonging to Messrs. Little, Dale & Co., of Rotterdam, being brought into France as having an English cargo on board, I have followed your opinion with regard to the condemnation of the cargo, which I think the more right as the English have in the West Indies confiscated several of our cargoes found in Dutch ships. But, to show respect to the declaration of the Empress of Russia, I have written to the owners of our privateers a letter, of which I enclose a copy, together with a copy of the judgment, for your use, if you hear of any complaint. I approve much of the principles of the confederacy of the neutral Powers, and am not only for respecting the ships as the house of a friend, though containing the goods of an enemy, but I even wish, for the sake of humanity, that the law of nations may be further improved by determining that, even in time of war, all those kinds of people who are employed in procuring subsistence for the species, or in

exchanging the necessaries or conveniences of life, which are for the common benefit of mankind—such as husbandmen on their lands, fishermen in their barques, and traders in unarmed vessels—shall be permitted to prosecute their several innocent and useful employments without interruption or molestation, and nothing taken from them, even when wanted by an enemy, but on paying a fair price for the same.

I think you have done well to print the letter of Clinton; for, though I have myself had suspicions whether some parts of it were really written by him, yet I have no doubt of the facts stated, and think the piece valuable, as giving a true account of the state of British and American affairs in that quarter. On the whole, it has the appearance of a letter written by a general who did not approve of the expedition he was sent upon; who had no opinion of the judgment of those who drew up his instructions; who had observed that the preceding commanders—Gage, Burgoyne, Keppel, and the Howes—had all been censured by the Ministers, for having unsuccessfully attempted to execute injudicious instructions with unequal force; and he therefore wrote such a letter, not merely to give the information contained in it, but to be produced in his vindication, when he might be recalled, and his want of success charged upon him as a crime; though, in truth, owing to the folly of the Ministers, who had ordered him on impracticable projects, and persisted in them, notwithstanding his faithful informations, without furnishing the necessary number of troops he had demanded. In this view, much of the letter may be accounted for, without supposing it fictitious; and therefore, if not genuine, it is ingeniously written. But you will easily conceive that, if the state of public facts it contains were known in America to be false, such a publication there would have been absurd, and of no possible use to the cause of the country.

I have written to M. Neufville concerning the bills you mention. I have no orders or advice about them, know nothing of them, and therefore cannot prudently meddle with them; especially as the funds in my power are not more than sufficient to answer the Congress bills for interest and other inevitable demands. He desired to know whether I would engage to reimburse him, if he should accept and pay them; but as I know not the amount of them, I cannot enter into any such engagement; for though, if they are

genuine Congress bills, I am persuaded all possible care will be taken by Congress to provide for their punctual payment, yet there are so many accidents, by which remittances are delayed or intercepted in the time of war, that I dare not hazard for these new bills the possibility of being rendered unable to pay the others.

With great esteem, I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Versailles, June 30th, 1780.

Sir,

I did not until this day receive the letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 24th of this month.

You request, in consequence of an application made to you by Mr. Adams, that the orders given to the Chevalier de la Luzerne relative to a resolution of Congress of the 18th of March last should be revoked, or at least suspended, as that Plenipotentiary is able to prove that those orders are founded on false reports.

Mr. Adams, on the 22d, sent me a long dissertation on the subject in question, but it contains only abstract reasonings, hypothesis, and calculations, which have no real foundation, or which at least do not apply to the subjects of the King, and in fine principles, than which nothing can be less analogous to the alliance subsisting between his Majesty and the United States.

By this, sir, you can judge that the pretended proofs mentioned by Mr. Adams are not of a nature to induce us to change our opinion, and consequently cannot effect a revocation or suspension of the orders given to the Chevalier de la Luzerne. The King is so firmly persuaded, sir, that your private opinion respecting the effects of that resolution of Congress, as far as it concerns strangers, and especially Frenchmen, differs from that of Mr. Adams, that he is not apprehensive of laying you under any embarrassments by requesting you to support the representations which his Minister is ordered to make to Congress. And that you may be enabled to do this with a complete knowledge of the case, his Majesty has commanded me to send you a copy of my letter to Mr. Adams, the observations of that Plenipotentiary, and my answer to him.

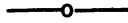
The King expects that you will lay the whole before Congress,

and his Majesty flatters himself that that assembly, inspired with principles different from those which Mr. Adams has discovered, will convince his Majesty that they know how to prize those marks of favor which the King has constantly shown to the United States.

However, sir, the King does not undertake to point out to Congress the means which may be employed to indemnify the French, who are holders of the paper money. His Majesty, with respect to that, relies entirely on the justice and wisdom of that assembly.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO B. FRANKLIN.

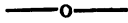
Philadelphia, July 11th, 1780.

Sir,

After the repeated remonstrances which you have made to Congress on the subject of bills of exchange, the enclosed resolution, we are well aware, will need an apology. We regret that you should have so much trouble, and be put to so many expedients in matters of this kind, well knowing how delicate a point it is to solicit further advances, after so many have already been made. Congress, attending to your letters and representations, have taken this step with reluctance; but the present crisis, when not only the preparations for a vigorous campaign call for large expenditures, but the expectation of a coöperating force makes great additions necessary, has induced them to risk the sum mentioned. The bills will not be drawn faster than indispensable exigencies may require, and it is to be hoped that this mode of commanding cash will not be again resorted to.

We are, sir, &c.,

JAMES LOVELL,  
W. C. HOUSTON.



COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, July 11th, 1780.

Sir,

Congress having appointed the Honorable Henry Laurens to solicit a loan of money in the United Provinces of the Low

Countries, in order to facilitate his success the enclosed resolution has been passed. We need say nothing to explain or urge it, except that it is thought a mark of attention and confidence due to those Powers named in it, that their interest, if the state of politics inclines them to exert it, will have a good effect; and that the want of money makes the loan a very capital object to the United States. You will, we are sure, give Mr. Laurens every assistance in your power, and solicit the countenance of the Court where you reside, to forward his negociations.

Until Mr. Laurens shall arrive, Mr. Adams is commissioned and empowered to undertake that business, and in case of his disability, Mr. Dana is in like manner commissioned and empowered.

We are, sir, your humble servants,

JAMES LOVELL,  
W. C. HOUSTON.



THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO B. FRANKLIN.

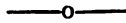
Philadelphia, July 11th, 1780.

Sir,

We are to communicate to you that Congress entertain a favorable sense of the attention and services of Mons. de Chezaulx, his Most Christian Majesty's Consul at the port of Bergen, in Norway, in the late affair of the prizes sent in there by the squadron commanded by Captain Jones, and we beg you will present, through the proper channel, the acknowledgment to be made for the polite respect shown to the interests of the citizens of these States.

We are, sir, your very humble servants,

JAMES LOVELL,  
W. C. HOUSTON.



COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO H. DOHRMAN, MERCHANT, LISBON.

Philadelphia, July 11th, 1780.

Sir,

Mr. George Anderson, of Virginia, having informed us of the humane and benevolent attention uniformly given by you to the citizens of these States who have been so unfortunate as to be captivated at sea and carried into the ports of Portugal, we represented the same to Congress, to whom it gave much pleasure

to know that those men had found a patron and friend disposed to alleviate their distresses.

The enclosed resolve constitutes you an Agent of Congress, and you will from time to time receive powers and instructions from that body through this committee. At present, we need only say in general, that the affairs of the citizens of America applying for relief in captivity are committed to your discretion, and your countenance and advice in matters of business are solicited for others.

We wish to learn from you in what manner you would be repaid, trusting that, though the war in which this Republic is engaged oppresses it with expense, and calls now for all its resources, you will by no means fail in the end of compensation.

You must be governed in your advances on account of these United States more by that economy which their circumstances make essential, than by the liberality of your own habits, which American subjects in distress will probably but too often stimulate. You ought to know that Doctor Franklin and others who have advanced moneys to Americans under the misfortune of captivity, have transmitted receipts regularly, so that due charges may be made against those who are in public service, and repayment may be had of those who are in condition to make it while in private employ.

You will correspond with our Ministers and Agents in France, Spain, and Holland, whenever you may thereby promote the interests of these United States, for which you have manifested already so much regard.

We are, sir, your most humble servants,

JAMES LOVELL,  
WILLIAM C. HOUSTON.

—o—

DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, July 17th, 1780.

My dear Friend

Enclosed I send you a copy of a conciliatory bill,\* which was

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\* *Draft of a proposed Bill for Conciliation with America.*

A Bill to invest the Crown with sufficient powers to treat, consult, and finally to agree upon the means of restoring peace with the Provinces of North America.

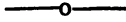
Whereas many unfortunate subjects of contest have of late years subsisted



proposed in the House of Commons on the 27th of last month. It was rejected. You and I have had so much intercourse upon the subject of restoring peace between Great Britain and America, that I think there is nothing further left to be said upon the subject. You will perceive by the general tenor of the bill, that it proposes a general power to treat. It chalks out a line of negociation in very general terms. I remain in the sentiments which I ever have, and which I believe I ever shall entertain, viz: those of seeking peace upon honorable terms. I shall always be ready, and most desirous to join in any measures which may facilitate peace.

I am ever your most affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.



TO C. W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, July 26th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I wrote to Messrs. de Neufville by the last post, in answer to

between Great Britain and the several Provinces of North America, hereinafter recited, viz: New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, which have brought on the calamities of war between Great Britain and the aforesaid Provinces: To the end therefore that the further effusion of blood may be prevented, and that peace may be restored, may it please your Majesty that it be enacted, and be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that it shall and may be lawful for his Majesty, by letters patent, under the great seal of Great Britain, to authorise and empower any person or persons, to treat, consult, and finally to agree with any person or persons properly authorised on the part of the aforesaid Provinces of North America, upon the means of restoring peace between Great Britain and the aforesaid Provinces, according to the powers in this act contained.

And be it further enacted, that in order to facilitate the good purposes of this act, his Majesty may lawfully enable any such person or persons, so appointed by his Majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to order and proclaim a cessation of hostilities on the part of his Majesty's forces, by sea and land, for any time, and under any conditions or restrictions.

And be it further enacted, that in order to lay a good foundation for a cordial reconciliation and lasting peace between Great Britain and the aforesaid Provinces of North America, by restoring an amicable intercourse between the same as soon as possible, his Majesty may lawfully enable any such person or persons, so appointed by his Majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to enter into and to ratify, from time to time, any article or articles of intercourse and pacification, which article or articles, so entered into and ratified from time to time, shall remain in full

theirs of the 14th. I hope they received my letter. It signified that I could accept the bills drawn on Mr. Laurens. I find by a vote of Congress on the 4th of March, that they then stopped drawing, and I am informed no more bills have been issued since. I could not relish those gentlemen's proposal of mortgaging *all our estates* for the little money Holland is likely to lend us. But I am obliged to them for their zeal in our cause.

I received, and thank you for the protest relating to the election of the coadjutor. You seem to be too much affected with the taking of Charleston. It is so far a damage to us, as it will enable the enemy to exchange a great part of the prisoners we had in our hands; otherwise their affairs will not be much advanced by it. They have successively been in possession of the capitals of five provinces, viz: Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New York, and Georgia; but were not, therefore, in possession of the provinces themselves. New York and Georgia still continue

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force and effect for the certain term of ten years, from the first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and eighty.

Provided also, and be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that in order to remove any obstructions which may arise to the full and effectual execution of any article or articles of intercourse and pacification, as before mentioned, that it shall and may be lawful for his Majesty, by any instrument under his sign manual, countersigned by one or more of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, to authorise and empower any such person or persons, so appointed by his Majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to suspend for the term of ten years from the first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and eighty, the operation and effect of any act or acts of Parliament, which are now in force, respecting the aforesaid Provinces of North America, or any clause or clauses, proviso or provisos, in any such act or acts of Parliament contained; inasmuch as they or any of them, may obstruct the full effect and execution of any such article or articles of intercourse and pacification, which may be entered into and ratified as before mentioned, between Great Britain and the aforesaid Provinces of North America.

And be it further enacted, that in order to establish perpetual reconciliation and peace between Great Britain and the aforesaid Provinces of North America, it is hereby required, and be it enacted, that all or any article or articles of intercourse and pacification which shall be entered into and ratified, for the certain term of ten years, as before mentioned, shall from time to time be laid before the two Houses of Parliament, for their consideration, as the perpetual basis of reconciliation and peace between Great Britain and the aforesaid Provinces of North America; and that any such article or articles of intercourse and pacification as before mentioned, when the same shall have been confirmed in Parliament, shall remain in full force and effect forever.

And be it further enacted, that this act shall continue to be in force until the thirty-first day of December, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-one.

their operations as free States; and so, I suppose, will South Carolina. The cannon will be recovered with the place; if not, our furnaces are constantly at work in making more. The destroying of our ships by the English, is only like shaving our beards, which will grow again. Their loss of provinces is like the loss of a limb, which can never again be united to their body. I was sorry to hear of your indisposition. Take care of yourself. Honey is a good thing for obstructions in the reins. I hope your health is by this time reëstablished.

I am less committed than you imagine in the affair between Jones and Landais. The latter was not dispossessed by me of his command, but quitted it. He afterwards took it into his head to resume it, which the former's too long stay at Paris gave him an opportunity of effecting. Captain Jones is going in the Ariel frigate to America, where they may settle their affairs as they can.

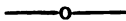
The captain commandant of Dunkirk, who occasioned the loss of our despatches, is himself taken by the English. I have no doubt of the truth of what Mr. White told you about the facility with which the tax was collected.

The same, Baron de Wulffen, has not pleased me, having left little debts behind him unpaid, though I furnished him with twenty guineas. As he had been with his brother at Venloo before he saw you, where he might get money, I wonder at his borrowing of you.

This will be delivered to you by his Excellency John Adams, whom I earnestly recommend to your best civilities. He has never been in Holland, and your counsels will be of use to him.

My best wishes attend you, being ever, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, August 9th, 1790.

Sir,

With this your Excellency will receive a copy of my last, dated May 31st, the original of which, with copies of preceding letters, went by the Alliance, Captain Landais, who sailed the beginning of last month, and who I wish may arrive safe in America, being apprehensive that, by her long delay in port, from the mutiny of the

people, (who, after she was ready to sail, refused to weigh anchor till their wages were paid,) she may fall in the way of the English fleet now out, or that her crew, who have ever been infected with disorder and mutiny, may carry her into England. She had, on her first coming out, a conspiracy for that purpose, besides which, her officers and captain quarrelled with each other, the captain with Commodore Jones, and there have been so many broils among them, that it was impossible to get the business forward while she stayed; and she is at length gone without taking the quantity of stores she was capable of taking, and was ordered to take.

I suppose the conduct of that captain will be inquired into by a court-martial. Captain Jones goes home in the *Ariel*, a ship we have borrowed of Government here, and carries one hundred and forty-six chests of arms, and four hundred barrels of powder. To take the rest of the stores, I have been obliged to freight a ship, which, being well armed and well manned, will, I hope, get in safe. The clothes for ten thousand men are, I think, all made up; there are also arms for fifteen thousand, new and good, with two thousand barrels of powder. Besides this, there is a great quantity of cloth I have bought, of which you will have the invoices sent by Mr. Williams; another large quantity purchased by Mr. Ross; all going in the same ship.

The little authority we have here to govern our armed ships, and the inconvenience of distance from the ports, occasion abundance of irregularities in the conduct of both men and officers. I hope, therefore, that no more of those vessels will be sent hither till our code of laws is perfected respecting ships abroad, and proper persons appointed to manage such affairs in the sea-ports. They give me infinite trouble; and, though I endeavor to act for the best, it is without satisfaction to myself, being unacquainted with that kind of business. I have often mentioned the appointment of a consul or consuls. The Congress have, perhaps, not yet had time to consider that matter.

Having already sent you, by different conveyances, copies of my proceedings with the Court of Denmark, relative to the three prizes delivered up to the English, and requested the instructions of Congress, I hope soon to receive them. I mentioned a letter from the Congress to that Court as what I thought might have a good effect. I have since had more reasons to be of that opinion.

The unexpected delay of Mr. Deane's arrival has retarded the settlement of the joint accounts of the commission, he having had the chief management of the commercial part, and being therefore best able to explain difficulties. I have just now the pleasure to hear that the Fier Rodrique, with the convoy from Virginia, arrived at Bordeaux, all safe except one tobacco ship, that foundered at sea; the men saved; and I have a letter from Mr. Deane that he is at Rochelle; proposes to stop a few days at Nantes, and then proceed to Paris, when I shall endeavor to see that business completed with all possible expedition.

Mr. Adams has given offence to the Court here, by some sentiments and expressions contained in several of his letters written to the Count de Vergennes. I mention this with reluctance, though perhaps it would have been my duty to acquaint you with such a circumstance, even were it not required of me by the Minister himself. He has sent me copies of the correspondence, desiring I would communicate them to Congress; and I send them herewith.\* Mr. Adams did not show me his letters before he sent them. I have, in a former letter to Mr. Lovell, mentioned some of the inconveniences that attend the having more than one Minister at the same Court; one of which inconveniences is, that they do not always hold the same language, and that the impressions made by one, and intended for the service of his constituents, may be effaced by the discourse of the other. It is true, that Mr. Adams's proper business is elsewhere; but the time not being come for that business, and having nothing else here wherewith to employ himself, he seems to have endeavored supplying what he may suppose my negociations defective in. He thinks, as he tells me himself, that America has been too free in expressions of gratitude to France, for that she is more obliged to us than we to her, and that we should show spirit in our applications. I apprehend that he mistakes his ground, and that this Court is to be treated with decency and delicacy. The King, a young and virtuous Prince, has, I am persuaded, a pleasure in reflecting on the generous benevolence of the action in assisting an oppressed people, and proposes it as a part of the glory of his reign. I think it right to increase this pleasure by our thankful

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\* These letters will be found in Mr. Adams's Correspondence in the month of June, 1780.

acknowledgments, and that such an expression of gratitude is not only our duty, but our interest. A different conduct seems to me what is not only improper and unbecoming, but what may be hurtful to us. Mr. Adams, on the other hand, who at the same time means our welfare and interest as much as I or any man can do, seems to think a little apparent stoutness, and a greater air of independence and boldness in our demands, will procure us more ample assistance. It is for the Congress to judge, and regulate their affairs accordingly.

M. de Vergennes, who appears much offended, told me yesterday that he would enter into no further discussions with Mr. Adams, nor answer any more of his letters. He is gone to Holland to try, as he told me, whether something might not be done to render us less dependent on France. He says the ideas of this Court and those of the people of America, are so totally different that it is impossible for any Minister to please both. He ought to know America better than I do, having been there lately, and he may choose to do what he thinks will best please the people of America. But when I consider the expressions of Congress in many of their public acts, and particularly in their letter to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, of the 24th of May last, I cannot but imagine that he mistakes the sentiments of a few for a general opinion. It is my intention, while I stay here, to procure what advantages I can for our country, by endeavoring to please this Court; and I wish I could prevent any thing being said, by any of our countrymen here, that may have a contrary effect, and increase an opinion lately showing itself in Paris, that we seek a difference, and with a view of reconciling ourselves to England. Some of them have of late been very indiscreet in their conversations.

I have received, eight months after their date, the instructions of Congress relating to a new article for guarantying the fisheries. The expected negociations for a peace appearing of late more remote, and being too much occupied with other affairs, I have not hitherto proposed that article. But I purpose doing it next week. It appears so reasonable, and equitable, that I do not foresee any difficulty. In my next I shall give you an account of what passes on the occasion.

The silver medal ordered for the Chevalier de Fleury has been delivered to his order here—he being gone to America. The others

for Brigadier General Wayne and Colonel Stewart, I shall send by the next good opportunity.

The two thousand pounds I furnished to Messrs. Adams and Jay, agreeable to an order of Congress, for themselves and Secretaries, being nearly expended, and no supplies to them arriving, I have thought it my duty to furnish them with further sums, hoping the supplies promised will soon arrive to reimburse me, and enable me to pay the bills drawn on Mr. Laurens, in Holland, which I have engaged for, to save the public credit, the holders of those bills threatening otherways to protest them. Messrs. de Neufvilles, of Amsterdam, had accepted some of them. I have promised those gentlemen to provide for the payment before they become due, and to accept such others as shall be presented to me. I hear, and hope it is true, that the drawing of such bills is stopped, and that their number and value is not very great.

The bills drawn in favor of M. de Beaumarchais for the interest of his debt are paid.

The German Prince who gave me a proposal some months since for furnishing troops to the Congress, has lately desired an answer. I gave no expectation that it was likely you would agree to such a proposal; but being pressed to send it to you, it went with some of my former letters.

M. Fouquet, who was employed by Congress to instruct people in making gunpowder, is arrived here, after a long passage. He has requested me to transmit a memorial to Congress, which I do, enclosed.

The great public event in Europe of this year is the proposal by Russia of an armed neutrality for protecting the liberty of commerce. The proposition is accepted now by most of the maritime Powers. As it is likely to become the law of nations, *that free ships should make free goods*, I wish the Congress to consider whether it may not be proper to give orders to their cruisers not to molest foreign ships, but conform to the spirit of that treaty of neutrality.

The English have been much elated with their success at Charleston. The late news of the junction of the French and Spanish fleets has a little abated their spirits; and I hope that junction, and the arrival of the French troops and ships in North America, will soon produce news that may afford us also in our turn some satisfaction.

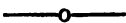
Application has been made to me here, requesting that I would solicit Congress to permit the exchange of William John Mawhood, a lieutenant in the 17th regiment, taken prisoner at Stony Point July 15th, 1779, and confined near Philadelphia; or, if the exchange cannot conveniently be made, that he may be permitted to return to England on his parole. By doing this, at my request, the Congress will enable me to oblige several friends of ours, who are persons of merit and distinction in this country.

Be pleased, sir, to present my duty to Congress, and believe me to be, with great respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. A similar application has been made to me in favor of Richard Croft, lieutenant in the 20th regiment, a prisoner at Charlottesville. I shall be much obliged by any kindness shown to that young gentleman, and so will some friends of ours in England, who respect his father.

B. F.



TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, August 10th, 1780.

Sir,

I received on the 12th of June, 1780, copies of your several favors of April the 29th, 1779, June the 13th, 1779, July the 9th and 16th, August and September the 16th, 1779. You will see by this what delays our correspondence sometimes meets with. I have lately received two of fresher date, viz: February the 24th and May the 4th. I thank you much for the newspapers and journals you have from time to time sent me; I endeavor to make full returns in the same way. I could furnish a multitude of despatches, with confidential informations, taken out of the papers I send you, if I chose to deal in that kind of manufacture; I know the whole art of it, for I have had several volunteer correspondents in England, who have in their letters, for years together, communicated to me secrets of State, extracted from the newspapers, which sometimes came to hand in those papers by the same post, and sometimes by the post before. You and I send the papers themselves. Our letters may appear the leaner, but what fat they have is their own.

I wrote to you the 17th of October, and the 16th of March, and



have sent duplicates, some of which I hope got to hand. You mention receiving one of September the 30th, and one of December the 30th, but not that of October the 17th. The cypher you have communicated, either from some defect in your explanation, or in my comprehension, is not yet of use to me, for I cannot understand by it the little specimen you have written in it. If you have that of M. Dumas, which I left with Mr. Morris, we may correspond by it when a few sentences are required only to be written in cypher, but it is too tedious for a whole letter.

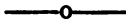
I send herewith copies of the instruments annulling the 11th and 12th articles of the treaty.\* The treaty printed here by the Court omitted them, and numbered the subsequent articles accordingly.

I write fully to the President. The frequent hinderances the Committee of Correspondence meet with in writing as a committee, which appear from the excuses in your particular letters, and the many parts of my letters, that have long been unanswered, incline me to think that your foreign correspondence would be best managed by one secretary, who could write when he had an opportunity, without waiting for the concurrence or opinions of his brethren, who cannot always be got conveniently together. My chief letters will, therefore, for the future, be addressed to the President, till further orders.

I send you enclosed some more of Mr. Hartley's letters. He continues passionately to desire peace with America, but wishes we could be separated from France.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, August 15th, 1780.

Sir,

Though I cannot procure the signatures of the Committee of Foreign Affairs at this moment, nor the resolve of Congress respecting bills to be drawn on you for one hundred thousand dollars, passed two or three days ago, the bills payable at ninety days' sight, yet I

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\* For these instruments, see the Correspondence of the Commissioners in Paris, Vol. I, pp. 315, 316.

should be blameable if I did not thus far notify you. The breach upon our taxes at the southward, by the possession which the enemy have there, made this disagreeable step necessary for the express purpose of supporting General Gates in that department.

Notwithstanding the mention made in our journals long ago of giving you a secretary, no vote has lately been taken for the purpose.

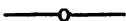
Mr. Laurens will be able, on any questions from you in corresponding, to give you whatever the gazettes do not convey.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL,

*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*

P. S. *August 27th, 1780.* I now add the resolves.



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

September 7th, 1780.

Sir,

With triplicate and duplicate of former dates I have to enclose to you some further proceedings of Congress, respecting bills of exchange drawn upon you, and to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May the 31st. I think I can venture now to assure you that not a single draft more will be made upon you, let the occasion be ever so pressing; but you must be entreated to work with all energy as to the past. You cannot conceive of the whole train of necessities which led to such decisions, after what you had written. Congress have lately called for three millions more than formerly, estimating in silver, to be paid by the last of December. Nothing but the weight of taxes will put an end to the levity with which our currency is treated.

New York has empowered its delegates to cede part of her western claims, and it is recommended to others to relinquish also a portion, and Maryland is anew invited to close the ratification of the confederating articles. We must as a whole show more vigor than of late.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL,

*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

TO C. W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, October 2d, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I received duly your several letters of the 12th, 15th, 17th, 19th, and 21st of September. I am much pleased with the intelligence you sent me, and with the papers you have had printed.

Mr. Searle is a military officer in the Pennsylvania troops, and a member of Congress. He has some commission to execute for that province, but none that I know of from Congress. He has an open letter for you from Mr. Lovell, which he has shown me. It is full of expressions of his esteem; and I understand from Mr. Searle that you stand exceedingly well with the Committee, and with the Congress in general. I am sorry to see any marks of uneasiness and apprehension in your letters. M. Chaumont tells me that you want some assurance of being continued. The Congress itself is changeable at the pleasure of their electors, and none of their servants have, or can have, any such assurance. If, therefore, any thing better for you, and more substantial, should offer, nobody can blame you for accepting it, however satisfied they may be with your services. But as to the continuance of what you may enjoy, or of something as valuable in the service of the Congress, I think you may make yourself easy; for your appointment seems more likely to be increased than diminished, though it does not belong to me to promise any thing.

Mr. Laurens was to sail three days after Mr. Searle, who begins to fear he must be lost, as it was a small vessel he intended to embark in. He was bound directly to Holland.

I enclose some extracts of letters from two French officers of distinction in the army of M. de Rochambeau, which are pleasing, as they mark the good intelligence that subsists between the troops, contrary to the reports circulated by the English. They will do, perhaps, for your Leyden Gazette.

With great esteem and affection, I am ever, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO C. W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, October 9th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I received yours of the 29th of September and 3d of October. It

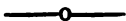
is a very good addition you have made to your memoir for the Ministers of Russia and Sweden. I am glad to find you are again on such good terms with the Ambassador as to be invited to his comedy. I doubt not of your continuing to cultivate that good understanding. I like much your insertions in the gazettes. Such things have good effects.

Your information relative to the transactions at Petersburg and in Denmark are very interesting, and afforded me a good deal of satisfaction, particularly the former. Mr. Searle will have the pleasure of seeing you. I recommend him warmly to your civilities. He is much your friend, and will advise Mr. Laurens to make you his secretary, which I hope you will accept. I have given it as my opinion that Mr. L. can nowhere find one better qualified, or more deserving. The choice is left to that Minister, and he is empowered to give a salary of £500 sterling a year. I am in pain on account of his not being yet arrived, but I hope you will see him soon. I request you would find means to introduce Mr. Searle to the Portuguese Ambassador. Pray consider the enclosed papers, and after advising with your friend, give me your opinion as to the manner of the application to the States-General, whether I should make it through their Ambassador, or directly with a letter to the Grand Pensionary, or in what other manner. You know we wrote to him formerly, and received no answer.

With great esteem, I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. You say nothing of Mr. Adams? How do you stand with him? What is he doing?



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, October 28th, 1780.

Sir,

A committee was appointed on the 6th to draft "a letter to our Ministers at the Courts of Versailles and Madrid, to enforce the instructions given by Congress to Mr. Jay, by their resolutions of the 4th instant, and so to explain the reasons and principles on which the same are founded, that they may respectively be enabled to

satisfy those Courts of the justice and equity of the intentions of Congress.”

That committee reported a draft of a letter to Mr. Jay, “and that a copy of it be communicated to Doctor Franklin, together with the resolution directing the draft.”

There is no member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs attending Congress but myself, nor have the Committee had a secretary or a clerk since T. Paine’s resignation. I must entreat you, therefore, sir, to excuse the economy of my request, that you would transmit to Mr. Jay all the papers which happen to reach you directed for him, taking copies of such as are left open, for your information. I persuade myself you will readily communicate to Mr. Adams what appears so much connected with his commission, though it has not been specially ordered by the report of the Committee on the draft.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,      JAMES LOVELL,  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*

—o—

TO SIR GREY COOPER, BARONET, SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY OF  
GREAT BRITAIN.

Passy, November 7th, 1780.

Sir,

I understand that Mr. Laurens, an American gentleman, for whom I have a great esteem, is a prisoner in the Tower, and that his health suffers by the closeness and rigor of his confinement. As I do not think that your affairs receive any advantage from the harshness of this proceeding, I take the freedom of requesting your kind interposition, to obtain for him such a degree of air and liberty, on his parole or otherwise, as may be necessary for his health and comfort. The fortune of war, which is daily changing, may possibly put it in my power to do the like good office for some friend of yours, which I shall perform with much pleasure, not only for the sake of humanity, but in respect to the ashes of our former friendship.

With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

CHARLES VERNON, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF THE TOWER OF LONDON,  
TO SIR GREY COOPER.

Hampstead, November 27th, 1780.

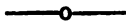
Dear Sir,

I am much ashamed to think that I shall appear so dilatory in answering the favor of your letter, but the truth is, I was not in town when the messenger left it in Cork street, and by the neglect of my servants I received it only on Sunday last. I went immediately to the Tower, to know from Mr. Laurens himself if he had any cause of complaint, and if he had availed himself of the indulgence allowed him by the Secretary of State, of walking within the Tower whenever it was agreeable to himself. His answer to me was full and frank to the questions, that he had received every reasonable indulgence since his confinement, and that by the liberty allowed him of walking, he found his health much mended. He said, at the same time, that he had always thought himself highly honored by the distinguished place of his confinement, and regretted much it was not in his power to make known to all the world the acknowledgments he had more than once made to me upon this subject.

I beg you will do me the favor to communicate these particulars to Lord George Germain as soon as convenient.

I have the honor to be, dear sir, &c.,

CHARLES VERNON.



SIR GREY COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, November 29th, 1780.

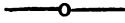
Sir,

I have received the honor of your letter, in which you acquainted me that you understood that the health of Mr. Laurens suffered by the closeness and rigor of his confinement in the Tower, and, after complaining of the harshness of the proceeding, you request me to endeavor to obtain for Mr. Laurens such a degree of air and liberty as may be necessary for his health and comfort. The enclosed letter, which I received from the Lieutenant Governor of the Tower, will show that I have not been inattentive to your request, and, at the same time, prove that the intelligence you receive of what passes in

this country is not always to be depended on for its accuracy and correctness.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

GREY COOPER.



INSTRUCTIONS FROM CONGRESS TO B. FRANKLIN.

In Congress, November 29th, 1780.

Sir,

The letters to his Most Christian Majesty which accompany these instructions, you will deliver without loss of time; you will, on all occasions, and in the strongest terms, represent the unalterable resolutions of these United States to maintain their liberties and independence, and invariably to adhere to the alliance at every hazard, and in every event. That the misfortunes of the last campaign, instead of repressing, have redoubled their ardor. That Congress are resolved to employ every resource in their power to expel the enemy from every part of the United States, by the most vigorous and decisive coöperation with the marine and troops of their illustrious ally; that they have called for a powerful army and ample supplies of provisions, and that the States are disposed effectually to a compliance with their requisitions. That if, in aid of our own exertions, the Court of Spain can be prevailed on to assume a naval superiority in the American seas, to furnish the arms, ammunition, and clothing, specified in the estimate herewith transmitted, and to assist us with the loan mentioned in the letter, we flatter ourselves that, under the divine blessing, the war must be speedily terminated, with glory and advantage to both nations. To procure these necessary aids you will employ unremitting attention and your utmost abilities; your own knowledge of our circumstances, and the fact suggested in the letter, will supply you with abundant argument to enforce our requisitions.

You will give Colonel Palfrey, late Paymaster General for our armies, and now our consul in France, all the support which is necessary for the exercise of his consular functions, as well as for the effectual execution of the special authority and instructions, which he will communicate. The sufferings of our army for the want of the clothing and arms which the grant of his Most Christian Majesty and your own despatch gave us reason to expect, and

the absolute and increasing necessity of their being immediately forwarded to give efficacy to our future operations, will especially impress upon you the dangerous consequences of a further disappointment.

With respect to the loan, we foresee that the sum we ask will be greatly inadequate to our wants. We wish, however, to depend as much as possible on our internal exertions. In this negotiation the state of our finances requires that you should endeavor to procure as long a respite after the war for payment of the principal as may be in your power. You may agree for an interest not exceeding the terms allowed or given on national security, in endeavoring to suspend the discharge of the interest for two or three years, if possible.

The loan must prove ineffectual, unless the specie is actually remitted. Experience has shown that the negotiations of bills is attended with insuperable loss and disadvantage. His Most Christian Majesty, we are persuaded, will see in the strongest light the necessity of despatching an effective naval armament to the American seas. This is a measure of such vast moment, that your utmost address will be employed to give it success. By such a conveyance the specie may be remitted by different ships of war with a prospect of safety.

You are instructed to procure a correspondence with Monsieur Stephen d'Andibert Caille, consul for unrepresented nations at the Court of the Emperor of Morocco. Assure him, in the name of Congress, and in the most respectful terms, that we entertain a sincere disposition to cultivate the most perfect friendship with the Emperor of Morocco, and are desirous of entering into a treaty of commerce with him, and that we shall embrace a favorable opportunity to announce our wishes in form. You are to take upon yourself, as far as may be consistent with your present functions, the office of adjusting preliminaries for a treaty with that Prince, according to the articles herewith forwarded; provided, that you shall conceive it for the honor and interest of the United States to make such overtures, and it shall be agreeable to the Court at which you reside.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, *President.*



TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, December 2d, 1780.

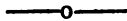
Sir,

I duly received your several favors of August the 15th and September the 7th, with the resolves of Congress for drawing on me bills extraordinary, to the amount of near three hundred thousand dollars. To keep up the credit of Congress I had already engaged for those drawn on Mr. Laurens. You cannot conceive how much these things perplex and distress me; for the practice of this Government being yearly to apportion the revenue to the several expected services, any after demands made, which the Treasury is not furnished to supply, meet with great difficulty, and are very disagreeable to the Ministers. To enable me to look these drafts in the face, I have agreed to a proposal contained in the enclosed letter to the President of furnishing provisions to the King's forces in America, which proposal I hope will be approved and executed, and that the Congress will strictly comply with the assurance you have given me, not to draw on me any more without first knowing that they have funds in my hands.

I wrote to you more fully by Captain Jones. He sailed some time since in the Ariel, but met with a severe storm, that entirely dismasted him, and obliged him to put back for France. He has been long refitting, but will sail again soon. Every thing goes well here.

With great esteem, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, December 2d, 1780.

Sir,

The many mutual advantages that must arise from carrying into execution the proposition already communicated to Congress, of furnishing provisions to the King's forces in America, to be paid for here, have, I make no doubt, already induced them to begin that operation. But as the proposition has lately been renewed to me, on occasion of my requesting further aids of money, to answer the unexpected drafts drawn upon me ordered by the resolutions of May

and August last, which drafts it is absolutely necessary I should find funds to pay ; and as the Congress have long desired to have the means of forming funds in Europe, and an easier, cheaper, and safer method cannot possibly be contrived, and as I see by the Journals of February, that the several States were to furnish provisions in quantities instead of supplies in money, whereby much will be in the disposition of Congress, I flatter myself that they will not disapprove of my engaging in their behalf with the Minister of the Finances here, that they will cause to be delivered for the King's land and sea forces in North America such provisions as may be wanted from time to time, to the amount of four hundred thousand dollars, the said provisions to be furnished at the current prices, for which they might be bought with silver specie.

I have constantly done my utmost to support the credit of Congress by procuring wherewith punctually to pay all their drafts, and I have no doubt of their care to support mine, in this instance, by fulfilling honorably my engagement ; in which case, receipts in due form should be taken of the person to whom the provisions are delivered in the several States, and those receipts sent to me here.

With great respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. This value, 400,000 dollars, is to be considered as exclusive of any provisions already furnished ; but the receipts for those should also be sent me, if not paid for there.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, December 3d, 1780.

Sir,

I duly received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me on the 12th of July past, by Mr. Searle, and have paid the bills drawn on me by order of Congress in favor of the President and Council of Pennsylvania, for one thousand pounds sterling, which were presented by him. He is at present in Holland.

The news of Mr. Laurens having been taken must have reached you long since. He is confined in the Tower, but of late has some more liberty for taking air and exercise than first was allowed him.

Certain papers found with him relating to the drafts of a treaty proposed in Holland, have been sent over to the Stadtholder, who laid them before their High Mightinesses, who communicated them to the Government of the city of Amsterdam, which justified the transaction. This has drawn from England, a memorial, delivered by Sir Joseph Yorke, demanding that the Pensionary and Magistrates of that city should be punished, and declaring that the King will resent a refusal of the States to comply with this demand. What answer will be given to this insolent memorial we do not yet know. But I hear it has produced much displeasure in Holland, and it is thought to have occasioned a more prompt accession to the armed neutrality, which had before met with obstructions from the English party there.

We have met with a variety of unaccountable delays and difficulties in the affair of shipping the clothing and stores. The Alliance went away without taking her part. The Ariel sailed, but met a storm at sea that dismasted her, and obliged her to return to France. She is nearly again ready to sail. Mr. Ross, with his cargo of clothes in the Duke of Leinster, sailed under convoy of the Ariel, but did not return with her, and I hope may get safe to America. The great ship we hired to come to L'Orient, and take in the rest of what we had to send, has been long unexpectedly detained at Bordeaux. I am afraid the army has suffered for want of the clothes; but it has been as impossible for me to avoid, as it was to foresee these delays.

The late Minister of the Marine here, M. de Sartine, is removed, and his place supplied by M. le Marquis de Castries. But this change does not affect the general system of the Court, which continues favorable to us.

I have received a copy of the resolutions of Congress of the 19th of May, and the 9th, 15th, 23d, and 30th of August, directing bills to be drawn on me for near 300,000 dollars. I shall accept the bills, hoping the Congress will approve of, and readily comply with the proposition contained in a letter to your Excellency accompanying this, dated the 2d instant. Probably an answer may arrive here before many of those bills shall become due, as few of them are yet arrived. If that answer ratifies the agreement I have made, I shall have no difficulty in finding means to pay the rest. If not, I shall scarce be able to bear the reproaches of merchants, that I have

misled them to their loss by my acceptations, which gave a promise of payment that, not being fulfilled, has deranged their affairs, to say nothing of the power I am told the Consul's Court here has over the persons, even of Ministers, in the case of bills of exchange. Let me, therefore, beg your Excellency to use your endeavors with Congress, that this matter may be immediately attended to.

Mr. Jay has no doubt acquainted you with his difficulties respecting the drafts upon him. I am sorry I cannot extricate him, but I hope he will still find means.

The Mars, an armed ship belonging to the State of Massachusetts, in her way to France, took and sent to New England a Portuguese ship bound to Cork, with salt belonging to some merchants there. The Portuguese captain, who is brought in here, complains heavily of ill usage and plunder, besides taking his vessel, and the Ambassador of that nation has communicated to me these complaints, together with all the papers proving the property of the vessel, &c., representing at the same time the good disposition of the Queen towards our States, and his wishes that nothing might lessen it, or tend to prevent or delay a complete good understanding between the two nations. I advised that the owners should send over their claim, and empower some person to prosecute it, in which case I did not doubt our courts would do them justice. I hope the Congress may think fit to take some notice of this affair, and not only forward a speedy decision, but give orders to our cruisers not to meddle with neutral ships for the future, it being a practice apt to produce ill blood, and contrary to the spirit of the new league which is approved by all Europe; and the English property found in such vessels will hardly pay the damages brought on us by the irregular proceedings of our captains in endeavoring to get at such property.

With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, December 21st, 1780.

Sir,

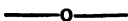
The bearer, William Palfrey, our late Paymaster General, has been appointed Consul in France, with powers adequate to a general

agency in our commercial concerns there. But, while I take up my pen to introduce him to your patronage, I ought to use it rather, perhaps, by way of apologizing for myself, in the line of a member of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, from whom you will find no letter. There was a prospect of much business being committed to you by this opportunity, but it was altogether depending upon the President and Secretary to transmit it, which, it seems, they were prevented from doing by an arrangement being but partly accomplished which Congress has thought fit to connect with those affairs. This proceeding is of a nature not to admit of my enlarging upon it, because neither my head nor heart suggests any thing of eulogium, and my conscience forbids me to pursue the usual style of minorities.

The journals which I send you will show that we have had no letter from you since that of May last, except two short ones lately respecting the private concerns of two officers, Baron d'Arendt, and another, whose name is not now in my memory. Colonel Palfrey will be able to give you information additional to the gazettes.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL,  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*



ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FROM CONGRESS TO B. FRANKLIN.

In Congress, December 27th, 1780.

Sir,

Since your last instructions,\* Congress have thought it expedient to send Colonel John Laurens, with powers to negotiate specially the important affairs to which they more immediately relate. This gentleman, from the nature of his services and situation, has had opportunities of information which peculiarly qualify him for giving to his Most Christian Majesty a more lively idea of our circumstances, of our indispensable wants, and of the great advantages which must result to the allies from his Majesty's complying with our request.

The negotiation is, besides, so critically important, that it was deemed highly requisite, by the mission of this special Minister, to

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\*See Instructions, p. 128.

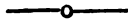
guard against the accident of your want of health, and the consequent delay in making the application.

Notwithstanding this appointment, should the duplicates of the despatches reach you before this Minister's arrival, you will consider it as the desire of Congress that you take, with all possible expedition, every step in your power for effecting the business, or, at least, for disposing his Most Christian Majesty and his Ministers to take a favorable impression from the representation which Colonel Laurens, from his advantages of fuller information, may be better able to make.

It is intended, and it is well known to be his own disposition, to avail himself of your information and influence; and Congress doubt not that the success of this measure will be much promoted by the assistance he will derive from you; and they desire you to consider your attention to him as a matter which will be very satisfactory to Congress and advantageous to your country.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, *President.*



TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, February 13th, 1781.

Sir,

I have just received from Congress their letter for the King, which I have the honor of putting herewith into the hands of your Excellency. I am charged, at the same time, to "represent, in the strongest terms, the unalterable resolution of the United States to maintain their liberties and independence, and inviolably to adhere to the alliance at every hazard, and in every event; and that the misfortunes of the last campaign, instead of repressing, have redoubled their ardor; that Congress are resolved to employ every resource in their power to expel the enemy from every part of the United States, by the most vigorous and decisive coöperation with marine and other forces of their illustrious ally; that they have accordingly called on the several States for a powerful army and ample supplies of provisions; and that the States are disposed effectually to comply with their requisitions. That if, in aid of their own exertions, the Court of France can be prevailed on to assume a naval superiority

in the American seas, to furnish the arms, ammunition, and clothing, specified in the estimate heretofore transmitted, and to assist with the loan mentioned in the letter, they flatter themselves that, under the Divine blessing, the war must speedily be terminated with glory and advantage to both nations."

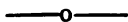
By several letters to me from intelligent persons, it appears that the great and expansive exertions of the last year, by which a force was assembled capable of facing the enemy, and which accordingly drew towards New York, and lay long near that city, was rendered ineffectual by the superiority of the enemy at sea, and that their successes in Carolina had been chiefly owing to that superiority, and to the want of the necessary means for furnishing, marching, and paying the expense of troops sufficient to defend that province. The Marquis de la Fayette writes to me that it is impossible to conceive, without seeing it, the distress which the troops have suffered for want of clothing; and the following is a paragraph of a letter from General Washington, which I ought not to keep back from your Excellency, viz: "I doubt not that you are so fully informed by Congress of our political and military state, that it would be superfluous to trouble you with any thing relative to either. If I were to speak on topics of the kind, it would be to show that our present situation makes one of two things essential to us; a peace, or the most vigorous aid of our allies, particularly in the article of *money*. Of their disposition to serve us, we cannot doubt; their generosity will do everything which their means will permit." They had in America great expectations, I know not on what foundation, that a considerable supply of money would be obtained from Spain; but that expectation has failed, and the force of that nation in those seas has been employed to reduce small forts in Florida, without rendering any direct assistance to the United States; and indeed the long delay of that Court in acceding to the treaty of commerce, begins to have the appearance of its not inclining to have any connexion with us; so that for effectual friendship, and for the aid so necessary in the present conjuncture, we can rely on France alone, and in the continuance of the King's goodness towards us.

I am grown old. I feel myself much enfeebled by my late long illness, and it is probable I shall not long have any more concern in these affairs. I therefore take this occasion to express my opinion to

your Excellency, that the present conjuncture is critical; that there is some danger lest the Congress should lose its influence over the people, if it is found unable to procure the aids that are wanted; and that the whole system of the new Government in America may thereby be shaken. That if the English are suffered once to recover that country, such an opportunity of effectual separation as the present may not occur again in the course of ages; and that the possession of those fertile and extensive regions, and that vast sea-coast, will afford them so broad a basis for future greatness, by the rapid growth of their commerce and breed of seamen and soldiers, as will enable them to become the *terror of Europe*, and to exercise with impunity that insolence which is so natural to their nation, and which will increase enormously with the increase of their power.

I am, with great respect, your Excellency's, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



## TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

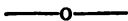
Passy, March 6th, 1781.

Sir,

By perusing the enclosed instructions to Colonel Laurens and myself, your Excellency will see the necessity I am under of being importunate for an answer to the application lately made for aids of stores and money. As vessels are about to depart for America, it is of the utmost importance that the Congress should receive advice by some of them, of what may or may not be expected. I therefore earnestly entreat your Excellency to communicate me, as soon as possible, the necessary information.

With sincere esteem, I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



## JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

March 9th, 1781.

Sir,

I forward gazettes, journals, and some particular resolves of Congress, via Amsterdam.

The arrival of the *Ariel* has given us despatches from you, long expected, of June 1st, August 9th, December 23d. Congress had, before the receipt of your letters of February 19th, written to Mr.

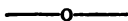


Adams, January 10th, and signified their concurrence in opinion with Count de Vergennes, as to the time and circumstances of announcing his (Mr. Adams's) powers to Great Britain. They had also on December 12th expressed their sentiments upon his letters of June 24th, enclosing to them his correspondence relative to the act of March 18th, calling in the old paper money.

I send you extracts from the Journals for your fuller information on these points, and I shall forward yet for a time all acts of Congress intended for your guidance whenever they are finished; but I most earnestly look for the appointment of a Secretary for Foreign Affairs, agreeably to their determinations of January 10th. Such an officer may authoritatively communicate his opinions, and in many ways make your station more easy and reputable to you, than it can have been under great want of information of our circumstances.

Your most humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL,  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*



TO M. DE RAYNEVAL, SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

Passy, March 11th, 1781.

Sir,

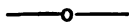
I have examined the list of supplies wanted in America, which I received yesterday from you, in order to mark as desired what may be most necessary to forward thither. As that list is of old date, and I do not know what part of it may have been already procured by other channels, and I understand by my letters that a new list has been made out, which is given to Colonel Laurens, and though mentioned to be sent to me also is not yet come to my hands, I have thought it may be well for the present to order the making of a quantity of soldiers' and officers' clothing, equal to one third part of what has been demanded from page 31 to page 42 inclusive; and to collect and get ready also one third of the other articles mentioned in said pages, which I have marked with a red line in the margin, the whole to be sent by the first good opportunity. I think it would be well also to send five thousand more good fusils, with fifty tons of lead, and two hundred thousand flints for fusils. If these could go with the fleet, it would be of great service. More powder is not

necessary to be sent at present, as there goes in the Marquis de la Fayette the remainder of the two thousand barrels granted last year, and also two hundred tons of saltpetre, which they will make into powder. For the other articles that may be wanted, as Colonel Laurens will come fully instructed, as well by the list given to him as from his own observation and experience in the army, and from the information he will receive from General Washington, with whom and the Marquis de la Fayette he was to consult before his departure, I conceive it will be best to wait a little for his arrival.

I return the lists; and having, by some unaccountable accident, mislaid and lost the paper you gave me, containing what Count de Vergennes said to me yesterday, I must beg the favor of you to repeat it, and send it by the bearer. I am ashamed to give you this trouble, but I wish to be exact in what I am writing of it to Congress.

With the greatest esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, March 12th, 1781.

Sir,

I had the honor of receiving, on the 13th of last month, your Excellency's letter of the 1st of January, together with the instructions of November 28th and December 27th, a copy of those to Colonel Laurens, and the letter to the King. I immediately drew a memorial, enforcing as strongly as I could the requests that are contained in that letter, and directed by the instructions, and I delivered the same with the letter, which were both well received; but the Ministry being extremely occupied with other weighty affairs, and I obtaining for some time only general answers that something would be done for us, &c., and Mr. Laurens not arriving, I wrote again, and pressed strongly for a decision on the subject, that I might be able to write explicitly by this opportunity what aids the Congress were, or were not, to expect, the regulation of their operations for the campaign depending on the information I should be enabled to give.

Upon this, I received a note, appointing Saturday last for a meeting with the Minister, which I attended punctually. He assured

me of the King's good will to the United States, remarking, however, that, being on the spot, I must be sensible of the great expense France was actually engaged in, and the difficulty of providing for it, which rendered the lending us twenty-five millions at present impracticable; but he informed me that the letter from the Congress, and my memorials, had been under his Majesty's consideration, and observed, as to loans in general, that the sum we wanted to borrow in Europe was large, and that the depreciation of our paper had hurt our credit on this side of the water; adding, also, that the King could not possibly favor a loan for us in his dominions, because it would interfere with, and be a prejudice to, those he was under the necessity of obtaining himself, to support the war; but that, to give the States a signal proof of his friendship, his Majesty had resolved to grant them the sum of six millions, not as a loan, but as a free gift. This sum, the Minister informed me, was exclusive of the three millions which he had before obtained for me to pay the Congress drafts for interest, &c., expected in the current year. He added that, as it was understood the clothing, &c., with which our army had been heretofore supplied from France was often of bad quality and dear, the Ministers would themselves take care of the purchase of such articles as should be immediately wanted, and send them over; and it was desired of me to look over the great invoice that had been sent hither last year, and mark out those articles; that, as to the money remaining after such purchases, it was to be drawn for by General Washington upon M. d'Harvelay, Garde du Tresor Royal, and the bills would be duly honored; but it was desired they might be drawn gradually, as the money should be wanted; and as much time given for the payment after sight as conveniently could be, that the payment might be more easy.

I assured the Minister that the Congress would be very sensible of this token of his Majesty's continued goodness towards the United States, but remarked, that it was not the usage with us for the General to draw, and proposed that it might be our Treasurer who should draw the bills for the remainder; but I was told that it was his Majesty's order; and I afterwards understood, from the Secretary of the Council, that, as the sum was intended for the supply of the army, and could not be so large as we had demanded for general occasions, it was thought best to put it into the General's hands, that it might not get into those of the different Boards or Committees,

who might think themselves under a necessity of diverting it to other purposes. There was no room to dispute on this point, every donor having the right of qualifying his gifts with such terms as he thinks proper.

I took with me the invoice; and, having examined it, I returned it immediately with a letter, of which a copy is enclosed, and I suppose its contents will be followed, unless Colonel Laurens, on his arrival, should make any changes. I hope he and Colonel Palfrey are safe, though, as yet, not heard of.

After the discourse relating to the aid was ended, the Minister proceeded to inform me that the Courts of Petersburg and Vienna had offered their mediation; that the King had answered that it would to him, personally, be agreeable, but that he could not yet accept it, because he had allies whose concurrence was necessary; and that his Majesty desired I would acquaint the Congress with this offer and answer, and urge their sending such instructions as they may think proper to their Plenipotentiary, it being not doubted that they would readily accept the proposed mediation, from their own sense of its being both useful and necessary. I mentioned that I supposed Mr. Adams was already furnished with instructions relating to any treaty of peace that might be proposed.

I must now beg leave to say something relating to myself, a subject with which I have not often troubled the Congress. I have passed my seventy-fifth year, and I find that the long and severe fit of the gout which I had the last winter has shaken me exceedingly, and I am yet far from having recovered the bodily strength I before enjoyed. I do not know that my mental faculties are impaired; perhaps I shall be the last to discover that; but I am sensible of great diminution in my activity, a quality I think particularly necessary in your Minister for this Court. I am afraid, therefore, that your affairs may, some time or other, suffer by my deficiency. I find, also, that the business is too heavy for me, and too confining. The constant attendance at home, which is necessary for receiving and accepting your bills of exchange, (a matter foreign to my ministerial functions,) to answer letters, and perform other parts of my employment, prevents my taking the air and exercise which my annual journeys formerly used to afford me, and which contributed much to the preservation of my health. There are many other little personal attentions which the infirmities of age render necessary to

an old man's comfort, even in some degree to the continuance of his existence, and with which business often interferes.

I have been engaged in public affairs, and enjoyed public confidence, in some shape or other, during the long term of fifty years, and honor sufficient to satisfy any reasonable ambition ; and I have no other left but that of repose, which, I hope, the Congress will grant me by sending some person to supply my place. At the same time, I beg they may be assured that it is not any the least doubt of their success in the glorious cause, nor any disgust received in their service, that induces me to decline it, but purely and simply the reasons above-mentioned. And as I cannot, at present, undergo the fatigues of a sea voyage, (the last having been almost too much for me,) and would not again expose myself to the hazard of capture and imprisonment in this time of war, I purpose to remain here at least till the peace ; perhaps it may be for the remainder of my life ; and if any knowledge or experience I have acquired here may be thought of use to my successor, I shall freely communicate it, and assist him with any influence I may be supposed to have, or counsel that may be desired of me.

I have one request more to make, which, if I have served the Congress to their satisfaction, I hope they will not refuse me ; it is, that they will be pleased to take under their protection my grandson, William Temple Franklin. I have educated him from his infancy, and I brought him over with an intention of placing him where he might be qualified for the profession of the law ; but the constant occasion I had for his service as a private secretary during the time of the Commissioners, and more extensively since their departure, has induced me to keep him always with me ; and, indeed, being continually disappointed of the secretary Congress had, at different times, intended me, it would have been impossible for me, without this young gentleman's assistance, to have gone through the business incumbent on me. He has, therefore, lost so much of the time necessary for law studies, that I think it rather advisable for him to continue, if it may be, in the line of public foreign affairs, for which he seems qualified by a sagacity and judgment above his years ; and great diligence and activity, exact probity, a genteel address, a facility in speaking well the French tongue, and all the knowledge of business to be obtained by a four years' constant employment in the Secretary's office, where he may be said to have

served a kind of apprenticeship. After all the allowance I am capable of making for the partiality of a parent to his offspring, I cannot but think he may, in time, make a very able foreign Minister for Congress, in whose service his fidelity may be relied on. But I do not, at present, propose him as such; for, though he is now of age, a few years more of experience will not be amiss. In the mean time, if they should think fit to employ him as a secretary to their Minister at any European Court, I am persuaded they will have reason to be satisfied with his conduct, and I shall be thankful for his appointment as a favor to me.

My accounts have been long ready for the examination of some person to be appointed for that purpose. Mr. Johnson having declined it, and Mr. Dana residing at present at Paris, I requested him to undertake it, and to examine at the same time those of Mr. Deane; but he also declines it, as being unacquainted with accounts. If no fresh appointment has been made by Congress, I think of desiring Mr. Palfrey to perform that service when he arrives, which I hope will be approved, for I am uneasy at the delay.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO FRANCIS LEWIS AND THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY.

Passy, March 17th, 1781.

Gentlemen,

I received the honor of yours, dated January the 2d, containing sundry questions relating to the ship Alliance, and the expedition under the command of John Paul Jones.

I apprehend that the letters and papers sent by the Alliance, if they came to your hands, and those which went in the Ariel, taken together, would pretty well inform you on the most of the particulars you inquire about, and the deficiencies might be supplied by Captain Jones himself and others who were engaged in the expedition. But as I learn from Colonel Laurens that his arrival was not heard of at Boston the 11th of February, though he sailed the 18th of December, and possibly he may have miscarried, I shall endeavor to answer as well as I can your several queries, and will hereafter send you duplicates of the papers that may be lost.

But I would previously remark, as to the expedition in general,

that this Court having, I suppose, some enterprise in view, which Captain Jones, who had signalised his bravery in taking the Drake, was thought a proper person to conduct, had soon after that action requested we would spare him to them, which was the more readily agreed to, as a difference subsisted between him and his Lieutenant, which laid us under a difficulty that was by that means got over. Some time passed, however, before any steps were taken to employ him in a manner agreeable to him, and possibly the first project was laid aside, many difficulties attending any attempt of introducing a foreign officer into the French marine, as it disturbs the order of their promotions, &c., and he himself choosing to act rather under the commission of Congress. However, a project was at length formed of furnishing him with some of the King's ships, the officers of which were to have temporary American commissions, which, being posterior in date to his commission, would put them naturally under his command for the time; and the final intention, after various changes, was to intercept the Baltic fleet.

The Alliance was at that time under orders to carry Mr. Adams back to America, but the Minister of the Marine, by a written letter, requesting I would lend her to strengthen the little squadron, and offering a passage for Mr. Adams in one of the King's ships, I consented to the request, hoping that, besides obliging the Minister, I might obtain the disposition of some prisoners to exchange for our countrymen in England.

*Question 1st.* "Whether the ships with which the frigate Alliance was concerted, in an expedition of which Captain John Paul Jones had the command, were the property of private persons, and, if so, who were the owners of those ships?"

*Answer.* The ships with which the Alliance was concerted were, 1st. The Bon Homme Richard, bought and fitted by the King on purpose for Captain Jones. 2dly. The Pallas frigate. 3dly. The Vengeance, a corvette. 4thly. The Cerf, a cutter. All belonging to the King, and the property of no private person whatever, as far as I have ever heard or believe.

Two privateers, the Monsieur and the Granville, were indeed with the little squadron in going out, I suppose to take advantage of the convoy, but being on their own account, and at their own discretion, the Monsieur quitted company on the coast of Ireland, and the Granville returned about the same time to France. I have not heard

that the Monsieur ever claimed any part of the prizes. The Granville has made some claim, on account not only of what were taken while she was with the squadron, but of the whole taken after her departure, on this pretence, that some prisoners being put on board of her, and losing company, she found herself obliged to go back with them, not having wherewith to maintain them, &c.; but this claim is opposed by the other ships, being regarded as frivolous, as she was not concerted. The claim, however, is not yet decided, but hangs in the courts. These circumstances show that these vessels were not considered as a part of the armament. But it appears more plainly by the *concordat* of the captains, whereof I send you a copy. Who the owners were of those privateers I have not heard. I suppose they may be inhabitants of Bordeaux and Granville.

*Question 2d.* "Whether any agreement was made by you, or any person in your behalf, with the owners of the ships concerted with the Alliance in that expedition, respecting the shares they were severally to draw of the prizes which might be taken during said expedition?"

*Answer.* I never made any such agreement, nor any person in my behalf. I lent the vessel to the King simply at the Minister's request, supposing it would be agreeable to Congress to oblige their ally, and that the division, if there should be any thing to divide, would be according to the laws of France, or of America, as should be found most equitable. But the captains, before they sailed, entered into an agreement, called the *concordat*, abovementioned, to divide according to the rules of America, as they acted under American commissions and colors.

*Question 3d.* "Whether the Serapis and Scarborough, and other captures made during said expedition, were divided among the captors, and the distribution made according to the resolution of Congress, and if not, what mode was pursued in making the distribution?"

*Answer.* No division has yet been made of the Serapis and Scarborough. It is but lately that I have heard of the money being ready for division at L'Orient. I suppose the mode will be that agreed on by the captains.

*Question 4th.* "What were the net proceeds of the Serapis, Scarborough, and the other prizes taken during the said expedition?"



*Answer.* I have not yet heard what were the net proceeds of prizes, nor have I seen any account. As soon as such shall come to my hands, I will transmit it to you, and will endeavor to obtain it speedily. No satisfaction has yet been obtained for the prizes carried into Norway, and delivered up by the King of Denmark.

*Question 5th.* "What benefit the United States of America have received from the prisoners made during said expedition?"

*Answer.* I did expect to have had all the prisoners taken by the squadron to exchange for Americans, in consideration of my having lent the Alliance, and Captain Pearson engaged in behalf of the British Government, by a written instrument, that those set on shore in Holland should be considered as prisoners of war to the United States, and exchanged accordingly. But I was, nevertheless, disappointed in this expectation; for an exchange of all the prisoners being proposed to be made in Holland, it was found necessary at that time by the Dutch Government, in order to avoid embroiling their State with England, that those prisoners should be considered as taken by France, and they were accordingly exchanged for Frenchmen, on the footing of the French cartel with England. This I agreed to on the request of the French Ambassador at the Hague, and also to avoid the risk of sending them by sea to France, (the English cruising with seven ships off the Texel to retake them,) and as it would be more convenient and certain for us to have an equal number of English delivered to me by France at or near Morlaix, to be sent over in the cartel. But the English Government afterwards refused very unjustly to give any Americans in exchange for English that had not been taken by Americans. So we did not reap the benefit we hoped for.

*Question 6th.* "What orders were given to Captain Landais?"

*Answer.* That he should obey the orders of Captain Jones.

*Question 7th.* "What was the ground of dispute between Captain Jones and him?"

*Answer.* That when at sea together, he refused to obey Captain Jones's orders.

*Question 8th.* "What were the disbursements on the Alliance, from the time of her first arrival in France, until she left that kingdom?"

*Answer.* The disbursements on the Alliance, from the time of her first arrival in France till the commencement of the cruise under

Captain Jones, as appears by the accounts of Mr. Schweighauser, agent appointed by William Lee, amounted to \_\_\_\_\_, which I paid. The disbursements on her refit in Holland were paid by the King, as were also those on her second refit after her return to L'Orient, as long as she was under the care of Captain Jones. But Captain Landais, when he resumed the command of her, thought fit to take what he wanted of Mr. Schweighauser's agent, to the amount of 31,668 livres 12s. 3d., for which, being contrary to my orders given to Mr. Schweighauser, on his asking them upon the occasion, I refused to pay, (my correspondence with him will show you my reasons,) and of those paid by the King I have no account.

*Question 9th.* "Why the Alliance lay so long at Port L'Orient, after her arrival there from the Texel, and in general every information in your power respecting the Alliance, and the expedition referred to?"

*Answer.* Her laying so long at L'Orient was first occasioned by the mutinous disposition of the officers and men, who refused to raise the anchors till they should receive wages and prize money. I did not conceive they had a right to demand payment of wages in a foreign country, or any where but at the port they came from, no one here knowing on what terms they were engaged, what they had received, or what was due to them. The prize money I wished them to have; but as that could not soon be obtained, I thought it wrong in them to detain the vessel on that account; and as I was informed many of them were in want of necessaries, I advanced twenty-four thousand livres on account, and put it into Captain Jones's hands to relieve and pacify them, that they might go more willingly. But they were encouraged by some meddling passengers to persist. The King would have taken the prizes, and paid for them at the rate *per gun*, &c., as he pays for warlike vessels taken by his ships; but they raised a clamor at this, it being put into their heads that it was a project for cheating them, and they demanded a sale by auction. The Minister, who usually gives more when ships are taken for the King than they will produce by auction, readily consented to this when I asked it of him; but then this method required time to have them inventoried, advertised in different ports to create a fuller concurrence of buyers, &c. Captain Jones came up to Paris to hasten the proceedings. In his absence, Captain

Landais, by the advice of Mr. Lee and Commodore Gillon, took possession of the ship, and kept her long, writing up to Paris, waiting answers, &c.

I have often mentioned to Congress the inconvenience of putting their vessels under the care of persons living, perhaps, one hundred leagues from the port they arrive at, which necessarily creates delays, and, of course, enormous expenses; and for a remedy I have as often recommended the appointment of consuls, being very sensible of my own insufficiency in maritime affairs, which have taken up a vast deal of my time, and given me abundance of trouble, to the hinderance sometimes of more important business. I hope these inconveniences will now be soon removed by the arrival of Mr. Palfrey.

As the Ministry had reasons, if some of the first plans had been pursued, to wish the expedition might be understood as American, the instructions were to be given by me, and the outfit was committed to Monsieur de Chaumont, known to be one of our friends, and well acquainted with such affairs. Monsieur le Marquis de la Fayette, who was to have been concerned in the execution, can probably acquaint you with those reasons. If not, I shall do it hereafter. It afterwards continued in the hands of M. de Chaumont to the end. I never paid or received a farthing directly or indirectly on account of the expedition; and the captains having made him their trustee and agent, it is to him they are to apply for their proportions of the captures. There may be something, though I believe very little, coming to the United States from the Alliance's share of a small ransom made contrary to orders.

No account has been rendered to me of that ransom, therefore I cannot say how much, but will inquire about it, and inform you hereafter.

Most of the colliers taken were burnt or sunk. The ships of war taken, I understand belong wholly to the captors. If any particulars remain, on which you desire information, be pleased to mention them. I think it my duty to give you all the satisfaction in my power, and shall do it willingly.

Being with great regard, gentlemen, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

*Agreement between Captain John Paul Jones and the Officers of the Squadron.*

Translation.

Agreement between Messieurs. John Paul Jones, Captain of the *Bon Homme Richard*; Pierre Landais, Captain of the *Alliance*; Dennis Nicolas Côtineau, Captain of the *Pallas*; Joseph Varage, Captain of the *Stag*; and Philip Nicolas Ricot, Captain of the *Vengeance*; composing a squadron, that shall be commanded by the oldest officer of the highest grade, and so on in succession in case of death or retreat. None of the said commanders, whilst they are not separated from the said squadron, by order of the Minister, shall act but by virtue of the brevet, which they shall have obtained from the United States of America, and it is agreed that the flag of the United States shall be displayed.

The division of prizes to the superior officers and crews of the said squadron, shall be made agreeably to the American laws; but it is agreed, that the proportion of the whole, coming to each vessel in the squadron, shall be regulated by the Minister of the Marine Department of France, and the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America.

A copy of the American laws shall be annexed to the present agreement, after having been certified by the commander of the *Bon Homme Richard*; but as the said laws cannot foresee nor determine as to what may concern the vessels and subjects of other nations, it is expressly agreed, that whatever may be contrary to them shall be regulated by the Minister of the French Marine, and the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America.

It is likewise agreed, that the orders given by the Minister of the French Marine, and the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America, shall be executed.

Considering the necessity there is of preserving the interests of each individual, the prizes that shall be taken shall be remitted to the orders of Monsieur le Ray de Chaumont, Honorary Intendant of the Royal Hotel of Invalids, who has furnished the expenses of the armament of the said squadron.

It has been agreed, that M. le Ray de Chaumont be requested not to give up the part of the prizes coming to all the crews, and to each

individual of the said squadron, but to their order, and to be responsible for the same in his own proper name.

Whereas the said squadron has been formed for the purpose of injuring the common enemies of France and America, it has been agreed that such armed vessels, whether French or American, may be associated therewith, as by common consent shall be found suitable for the purpose, and that they shall have such proportion of the prizes, which shall be taken, as the laws of their respective countries allow them.

In case of the death of any one of the beforementioned commanders of vessels, he shall be replaced agreeably to the order of the tariff, with liberty, however, to choose whether he will remain on board his own vessel, and give up to the next in order the command of the vacant ship.

It has moreover been agreed, that the commander of the *Stag* shall be excepted from the last article of this present agreement, because, in case of a disaster to *M. de Varage*, he shall be replaced by his second in command, and so on by the other officers of his cutter, the *Stag*.

J. P. JONES,  
P. LANDAIS,  
DE COTTINEAU,  
VARAGE,  
P. RICOT,  
LE RAY DE CHAUMONT.

—o—

JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

March 31st, 1781.

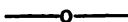
Sir,

I send you a few newspapers, and the last monthly journals which have come from the press. The enemy will tell their own story of the naval engagement on the 16th. They have ventured nearer to truth in *Rivington's Royal Gazette* than almost at any one time before since the very commencement of hostilities. Our allies conducted most gallantly, and the enemy are so convinced of the activity of the French commander that they have not ventured to remain in the Chesapeake Bay, to do all the damage which the event of the battle had put in their power.

I send you General Greene's account of an affair between him

and Cornwallis, on the 15th. It differs but little from the prints. I will endeavor to have it struck at the press. You shall have it, at least, with our good Secretary's attestation, which is in the best credit, even with the enemy. The opportunity of sending is too precarious to admit of my enlarging.

Your most humble servant,  
**JAMES LOVELL,**  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*



**JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.**

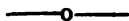
Philadelphia, May 9th, 1781.

Sir,

Mr. Samuel Curson and Mr. Isaac Gouverneur, Jr., of St. Eustatia, after that place was taken, were sent to England in the Vengeance man of war, Commodore Hotham, stripped of every thing but their wearing apparel; their books, papers, and slaves, having been taken from them, and Mrs. Gouverneur, with a young infant, turned out of doors. Special severity, it is supposed, has been shown to them in consequence of their acting as agents to Congress. Doctor John Witherspoon, Jr., also, who was surgeon of the De Graaf letter of marque, taken at St. Eustatia, is sent to England in the Alimena man of war, and very hardly treated, on account of his father being a member of Congress, as is supposed.

Your particular attention to the exchange of these persons will tend to give confidence to all who, being connected specially with Congress, are exposed to captivity, and will also very particularly oblige the relations of these unfortunates, who have requested Congress to mention these circumstances to you.

Your most humble servant,  
**JAMES LOVELL,**  
*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*



**TO M. DE LA FAYETTE.**

Passy, May 14th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

You are a very good correspondent, which I do not deserve, as I am a bad one. The truth is, I have too much business upon my

hands, a great deal of it foreign to my function as a Minister, which interferes with my writing regularly to my friends. But I am nevertheless extremely sensible of your kindness in sending me such frequent and full intelligence of the state of affairs on your side of the water, and in letting me see by your letters that your health continues as well as your zeal for our cause and country.

I hope that by this time the ship which has the honor of bearing your name is safely arrived. She carries clothing for nearly twenty thousand men, with arms, ammunition, &c., which will supply some of your wants; and Colonel Laurens will bring a considerable addition, if Providence favors his passage. You will receive from him the particulars, which makes my writing more fully by him unnecessary.

Your friends have heard of your being gone against the traitor Arnold, and are anxious to hear of your success, and that you have brought him to punishment. Enclosed is a copy of a letter from his agent in England, captured by one of our cruisers, and by which the price or reward he received for his treachery may be guessed at. Judas sold only one man, Arnold three millions. Judas got for his one man thirty pieces of silver, Arnold not a halfpenny a head. A miserable bargain! especially when one considers the quantity of infamy he has acquired to himself and entailed on his family.

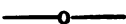
The English are in a fair way of gaining still more enemies; they play a desperate game. Fortune may favor them, as it sometimes does a drunken dicer; but, by their tyranny in the East, they have at length roused the Powers there against them, and I do not know that they have in the West a single friend. If they lose their India commerce, (which is one of their present great supports,) and one battle at sea, their credit is gone, and their power follows. Thus empires, by pride, folly, and extravagance, ruin themselves like individuals. M. de la Motte Piquet has snatched from between their teeth a good deal of their West India prey, having taken twenty-two sail of their homeward bound prizes. One of our American privateers has taken two more, and brought them into Brest, and two were burnt; there were thirty-four in company, with two men of war of the line and two frigates, who saved themselves by flight, but we do not hear of their being yet got in.

I think it was a wise measure to send Colonel Laurens here, who could speak knowingly of the state of the army. It has been attended

with all the success that perhaps could reasonably be expected, though not with all that was wished. He has fully justified your character of him, and returns thoroughly possessed of my esteem; but that cannot and ought not to please him so much as a little more money would have done for his beloved army. This Court continues firm and steady in its friendship, and does everything it can for us. Can we not do a little more for ourselves? My successor (for I have desired the Congress to send me one) will find it in the best disposition towards us, and I hope he will take care to cultivate that disposition. You, who know the leading people of both countries, can perhaps judge better than any member of Congress of a person suitable for this station. I wish you may be in a way to give your advice when the matter is agitated in that assembly. I have been long tired of the trade of Minister, and wished for a little repose before I went to sleep for good and all. I thought I might have held out till the peace, but as that seems at a greater distance than the end of my days, I grow impatient. I would not, however, quit the service of the public, if I did not sincerely think that it would be easy for the Congress, with your counsel, to find a fitter man. God bless you, and crown all your labors with success.

With the highest regard and most sincere affection, I am, dear sir,  
&c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, May 14th, 1781.

Sir,

I did myself the honor of writing to your Excellency pretty fully on the 12th of March, to which I beg leave to refer. Colonel Laurens arriving soon after, we renewed the application for more money.

His indefatigable endeavors have brought the good dispositions of this Court to a more speedy determination of making an addition, than could well have been expected so soon after the former grant. As he will have an opportunity of acquainting you personally with all the particulars of importance, a circumstantial account of the transaction from me is unnecessary. I would only mention, that



as it is the practice here to consider early in the year the probable expenses of the campaign, and appropriate the revenues to the several necessary services, all subsequent and unexpected demands are extremely inconvenient and disagreeable, as they cannot be answered without difficulty, occasion much embarrassment, and are sometimes impracticable. If, therefore, the Congress have not on this occasion obtained all they wished, they will impute it to the right cause, and not suppose a want of good will in our friends, who indeed are such, most firmly and sincerely.

The whole supply for the current year now amounts to twenty millions; but out of this are to be paid your usual drafts for interest money, those in favor of M. de Beaumarchais, and those heretofore drawn on Mr. Jay and Mr. Laurens, which I have already either paid or engaged for, with the support of your several Ministers, &c., &c., which I mention, that the Congress may avoid embarrassing my successor with drafts which perhaps he may not have the means in his hands of honoring. Besides paying the second year's salaries of Messrs. Adams and Dana, Jay and Carmichael, I have furnished Mr. Dana with £1,500 sterling credit on Petersburg, for which place I suppose he is now on his way.

You will receive from Holland advices of the late declaration of that Court with regard to the English refusal of its mediation, and of the assistance requested by the States-General. I hope Mr. Dana will find it well disposed towards us.

I have received no answer yet to my letters relating to the proposed mode of lodging funds here, by supplying the French fleet and army. Having as yet heard nothing of Colonel Palfrey, and it being now more than four months since he sailed, there is great reason to fear he may be lost. If that should unhappily be the case, the Congress cannot too soon appoint another consul, such an officer being really necessary here. Your Minister Plenipotentiary has hitherto had all that sort of business upon his hands; and as I do not now speak for myself, I may speak more freely, I think he should be freed from the burthen of such affairs, from all concerns in making contracts for furnishing supplies, and from all your bill of exchange business, &c., &c., that he may be more at liberty to attend to the duties of his political function.

The prisoners in England are increasing by the late practice of

sending our people from New York, and the refusal of the English Admiralty to exchange any Americans for Englishmen not taken by American armed vessels. I would mention it for the consideration of Congress whether it may not be well to set apart five or six hundred English prisoners, and refuse them all exchange in America but for our countrymen now confined in England.

Agreeably to the vote of Congress, and your Excellency's letter of the 4th of January, I have requested the assistance of this Court for obtaining the release of Mr. President Laurens. It does not yet appear that the thing is practicable. What the present situation is of that unfortunate gentleman may be gathered from the enclosed letters.\*

I hope the Alliance, with the ship *Marquis de la Fayette* under her convoy, is by this time arrived, as they sailed the 27th of March. I flatter myself that the supplies of clothing, &c., which they carry will be found good of the kind, and well bought. I have by several late opportunities sent copies of the Government letters taken in the New York packet. Your Excellency will see that they are written in the perfect persuasion of our submitting speedily, and that the Commissioners are cautioned not to promise too much with regard to the future constitutions to be given us, as many changes of the old may be necessary, &c. One cannot read those letters from the American Secretary of State, and his under-secretary, Knox, without a variety of reflections on the state we should necessarily be in, if obliged to make the submission they so fondly hope for, but which I trust in God they will never see. Their affairs in the East Indies, by the late accounts, grow worse and worse; and twenty-two ships of the prey they made in the West are wrenched out of their jaws by the squadron of M. de la Motte Piquet.

I mentioned, in a former letter, my purpose of remaining here for some time after I should be superseded. I mean it with the permission of Congress, and on the supposition of no orders being sent me to the contrary; and I hope it will be so understood.

With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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\* The reference here is to the letters of Sir Grey Cooper and Mr. Charles Vernon. See this volume, pp. 126 and 127.

TO THOMAS LEWIS.

Passy, May 16th, 1781.

Sir,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 1st of January. The bill for four thousand four hundred and forty-four Mexican dollars, which you remitted to Mr. Schweighauser, being refused payment by Mr. Jay, for want of a regular endorsement by Mr. Laurens, in whose favor it was drawn, and which endorsement could not now be obtained, Mr. Schweighauser applied to me, informing me that he should not send the things ordered by your Board unless the bill was paid; and it appearing on the face of the bill that it was drawn for public service, I concluded to take it up, on which he has purchased the things and shipped them. Colonel Laurens has put on board some other supplies for the army, and I suppose she will now sail directly.

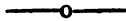
The drafts from Congress upon me for various services, and those on Mr. Jay and Mr. Laurens, all coming upon me for payment, together with the expenses on the ships, &c., &c., have made it impracticable for me to advance more for loading the Active; but as we have obtained lately promises of a considerable aid for this year, I shall now try what I can do, as the money comes in, towards supplying what is demanded in the invoice you mention. You will receive, I hope, twenty-eight cannon, and a large quantity of powder and saltpetre, by the ship Marquis de la Fayette.

I have by several opportunities written in answer to your questions relative to the ship Alliance.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

• P. S. Please to present my respects to the Board.



JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, May 17th, 1781.

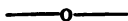
Sir,

Doctor Putnam, whose letter is enclosed, by the uniformity of his attachment to our public cause, merits your patronage. And I enclose for your information some former proceedings of Congress, in which this same gentlemen is interested; requesting, sir, that

you would obtain a knowledge of the proceedings consequent upon efforts which M. Gerard has undoubtedly made to obtain compensation for the sloop which Count d'Arband restored to the Governor of Antigua, after it had been taken by Doctor Putnam and others.

Your most humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, June 8th, 1781.

Sir,

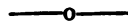
I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 4th instant. I do not know whether Mr. Laurens has purchased the clothing in Holland on account of Congress; I only know (and you were likewise informed of it at the same time) that this officer was *to employ for his purchases in France* part of the six millions which the King has granted to Congress, and that the residue of this sum was intended to be sent to America, with a view of reestablishing the credit of the United States.

If Mr. Laurens, instead of paying ready money in Holland, has contented himself with giving bills on you, I have no concern in it, and the King can furnish no means for your reimbursement.

As to the moneys arising from the loan opened in Holland, we have no pretensions to regulate the employment of them, as they belong to the United States. You must, therefore, sir, apply to Congress for the power of disposing of them, in discharge of the drafts drawn on you from all quarters.

I have the honor of being, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, June 11th, 1781.

Sir,

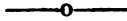
I have lately done myself the honor of writing largely to your  
 • Excellency by divers conveyances, to which I beg leave to refer.  
 This is chiefly to cover the copy of a letter I have just received from

the Minister, relative to the disposition of the late loans; by which will be seen the situation I am in with respect to my acceptances of the quantities of bills drawn by Congress on Mr. Jay, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Adams, and myself, which I entered into, in the expectation, which both Colonel Laurens and myself entertained, that a part of these loans might be applied to the payment of these bills, but which I am now told cannot be done without an express order from Congress.

I shall endeavor to change the sentiments of the Court in this respect, but I am not sure of succeeding. I must therefore request that a resolution of Congress may immediately be sent, empowering me to apply as much of those loans as shall be necessary for the discharge of all such drafts of Congress, or for the repayment of such sums as I may in the mean time be obliged to borrow for the discharge of those drafts.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, June 11th, 1781.

Sir,

Mr. Grand has communicated to me a letter from your Excellency to him, relating to certain charges in your account, on which you seem to desire to have my opinion. As we are all new in these matters, I consulted, when I was making up my account, one of the oldest foreign Ministers here, as to the custom in such cases. He informed me that it was not perfectly uniform with the Ministers of all Courts, but that in general, where a salary was given for service and expenses, the expenses understood were merely those necessary to the man, such as house-keeping, clothing, and coach; but that the rent of the hotel in which he dwelt, the payment of couriers, the postage of letters, the salary of clerks, the stationery for his bureau, with the feasts and illuminations made on public occasions, were esteemed the expenses of the Prince, or State that appointed him, being for the service or honor of his Prince or nation; and either entirely, or in great part, expenses that, as a private man, he would have been under no necessity of incurring. These, therefore, were to be charged in his accounts. He remarked, it was true that the

Minister's house-keeping as well as his house was usually, and in some sort necessarily more expensive, than those of a private person, but this he said was considered in his salary to avoid trouble in accounts; but that where the Prince or State had not purchased or built a house for their Minister, which was sometimes the case, they always paid his house rent.

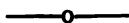
I have stated my own accounts according to this information; and I mention them that if they seem to you reasonable we may be uniform in our charges, by your charging in the same manner; or if objections to any of them occur to you, that you would communicate them to me for the same reason.

Thus you see my opinion that the articles you mention of courtage, commission, and port de lettres, are expenses that ought to be borne, not by you, but by the United States. Yet it seems to me more proper that you should pay them, and charge them with the other articles abovementioned, than that they should be paid by me, who, not knowing the circumstances, cannot judge (as you can) of the truth or justice of such an account when presented, and who, besides, have no orders to pay more on your account than your net salary.

With regard to that salary, though your receipts to Fitzeaux and Grand, shown to me, might be quite sufficient to prove they had paid you the sum therein mentioned, yet, as there are vouchers for them, and which they have a right to retain, I imagine it will be clearest if you draw upon me, agreeably to the order of Congress; and if this is quarterly, it will be the most convenient to me.

With great respect, I have the honor, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS TO B. FRANKLIN.

In Congress, June 19th, 1781.

Sir,

Congress have received your letter of the 12th of March last, with the papers enclosed. The prospect of conferences being soon opened in Europe, under the mediation of the imperial Courts of Petersburg and Vienna, for accommodating the disputes between the belligerent Powers, which must necessarily involve the essential interests of these United States, has determined us to increase the number of our Ministers for negotiating a peace with Great Britain.

We have, therefore, added yourself, Messrs. Jay, H. Laurens, and Thomas Jefferson, to Mr. Adams, to repair to such place as shall be fixed on for transacting this important business.

A compliance with your request to retire from public employment would be inconvenient at this particular juncture, as it is the desire of Congress to avail themselves of your abilities and experience at the approaching negociation. Should you find repose necessary after rendering the United States this further service, Congress, in consideration of your age and bodily infirmities, will be disposed to gratify your inclination.

You will present the letter to his Most Christian Majesty, and communicate to him the instructions to our Ministers for negotiating a peace, attended with such a memorial as your prudence shall suggest and the importance of the subject requires.

With great esteem, I am, &c.,  
**SAMUEL HUNTINGTON,**  
*President of Congress.*

—o—

TO MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON.

Sir,

Passy, June 28th, 1781.

Since my acceptance of your bills, I have applied to the Ministry for more money to discharge the other engagements I entered into for payment of the Congress bills drawn on Holland and Spain. I find so much difficulty, and even impossibility of obtaining it at this time, that I am under the absolute necessity of stopping the cash that is in Holland, or of ruining all the credit of the States in Europe, and even in America, by stopping payment.

This is, therefore, to order, that, in case the said cash has been delivered to you by Messrs. Fizeaux and Grand, you would immediately return it into their hands, to remain there at my disposal. I am sorry that this operation is necessary, but it must be done, or the consequences will be terrible.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

**B. FRANKLIN.**

—o—

MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Sir,

Amsterdam, June 29th, 1781.

I have the honor to inform your Excellency that I got to Amster-

dam on Tuesday morning. It has been thought advisable to wait a few days, that we may sail with a Dutch squadron of fourteen sail, destined as a convoy to the Baltic. The loss of the ship *Marquis de la Fayette*, which is confirmed by Lloyd's list, renders every precaution necessary and essential to prevent a further disappointment in supplies.

I hope your Excellency will approve of the reasons for delaying our departure, which must be amply compensated by the benefit of a convoy through the North Sea. I beg leave to request that Colonel Laurens's servant may be informed, should he apply to your Excellency, that, if he leaves Paris immediately and travels with despatch, he will reach this place in time to embark with us for America. Any commands, which your Excellency may please to honor me with, and which may be transmitted by him, will be faithfully attended to.

I beg you will present my best respects to your grandson.

I have the honor to be, with profound respect, &c.,

W. JACKSON.

—o—  
TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, June 30th, 1781.

I received my dear friend's kind letter of the 15th inst., and immediately communicated your request of a passport to the Count de Vergennes. His answer, which I have but just received, expresses an opinion, that the circumstance of his granting a passport to you, as you mention the purpose of your coming to be the discoursing with me on the subject of peace, might, considering your character, occasion many inconvenient reports and speculations, but that he would make no difficulty of giving it, if you assured me that you were authorised for such purpose by your Ministry, which he does not think at all likely; otherwise he judges it best that I should not encourage your coming. Thus it seems I cannot have at present the pleasure you were so kind as to propose for me. I can only join with you in earnest wishes for peace, a blessing which I shall hardly live to see.

With the greatest esteem and respect, I am ever, dear sir,

B. FRANKLIN.



## MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Amsterdam, July 2d, 1781.

Sir,

I was yesterday honored with your Excellency's letter of the 28th ultimo, while at the Texel, superintending some matters relating to the ship. Equally concerned for the cause, as surprised at the manner in which Mr. Fizeaux was resolved to execute it, in case the money had been already shipped, I must beg leave to inform you fully of this business, and to request your Excellency's final determination thereon.

Colonel Laurens, as your Excellency knows, was sent by Congress to the Court of Versailles with a special commission; the purport of his mission you are well acquainted with; it was to obtain certain supplies in specie and military stores.

By the most unremitting assiduity, he so far succeeded as to procure, amongst others, a sum of money to be shipped in Holland by the South Carolina frigate, which was deemed by the Court of France a safe and convenient conveyance, as it would divide the risk which must have been incurred by placing the whole on board of one vessel. That sum was sent to this place by M. Necker, and lodged in the house of Fizeaux and Grand, to be by them delivered to me, agreeably to the following order, the original of which is now in my possession, having, very fortunately for me, recovered from ~~them~~ after they received your instructions:

## Translation.

"Paris, May 12th, 1781.

"Gentlemen,

"This letter will be delivered to you by Mr. William Jackson, captain of infantry in the service of the United States, to whom I request you to deliver the 130,655 dollars, and the 720,000 livres in crowns, which you have received on my account, by the way of Brussels. Mr. Jackson will give you a receipt for it, in which he will express that these two sums have been delivered to him pursuant to the intention of Mr. John Laurens, an American officer now at Paris, whose orders he will follow on this subject. You will be pleased to send me afterwards this receipt, with a statement of all

the expenses due to you. I will have them reimbursed here to M. Grand.

“I am, gentlemen, &c.,

NECKER.

“MM. Grand, Fizeaux & Co., Amsterdam.”

Messrs. Fizeaux and Grand have, in pursuance of your Excellency's directions, refused to deliver it. This, sir, being a distinct transaction, executed altogether at the instance of the Honorable John Laurens, special Minister at the Court of Versailles from the United States, and by him committed to my further care, I conceive myself indispensably bound to remonstrate to your Excellency on the late order given by you to Messrs. Fizeaux and Grand, directing the detention of that money, and to inform you that if they are not repealed, I must embark without it; and however I may lament the disappointment and distress in which this measure must involve Congress, whose arrangements are undoubtedly taken on the certainty of this supply being sent from Europe; however much I may regret Colonel Laurens's absence which induces it, I shall possess the pleasing reflection of having done my duty in demanding, conformably to the intentions of M. Necker, and by his order, that money which the Court of France had accorded to the United States by the application of Colonel Laurens, in virtue of his special commission, and which was particularly and expressly destined to reanimate the credit of the Continental currency.

The ship waits for nothing else but this money. I shall attend your Excellency's ultimate decision thereon, which I expect to receive by return of the express, who only waits your commands.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

W. JACKSON.

P. S. M. Fizeaux informed me that he had resolved to arrest the ship had the money been on board. I need not inform your Excellency that a like opportunity may not again offer to transport this essential supply, rendered still more so by the capture of the ship Marquis de la Fayette.

W. J.

My fever, which was greatly increased by my late jaunt to Passy, will not admit of my waiting upon your Excellency in person; and I am persuaded your justice will render it unnecessary after this representation.

W. J.

MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Amsterdam, July 2d, 1781.

Sir,

Since the departure of my express I find myself obliged, in conformity to Colonel Laurens's instructions, (from which, as his agent, I cannot recede, unless compelled thereto by forcible means, and which, unless such are practised against me, I must carry into execution,) to retain the money which he has confided to my care, and which the Minister of Finance's order makes deliverable to me specially; and to arrest it in the hands of M. Fizeaux, should he continue to refuse the delivery of it but by your Excellency's orders.

I rely upon your Excellency's attachment to the welfare of America to prevent this painful operation, which must inevitably take place should your determination decide otherwise; for, as this money is subject to no other control in Europe but the immediate order of the Court of France, I cannot relinquish my charge of it but by their special order.

I have the honor to be, &amp;c.,

W. JACKSON.



MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Amsterdam, July 2d, 1781.

Sir,

Your Excellency will not wonder at the determination which I have adopted to arrest the money now in M. Fizeaux's hands, (and which I have communicated to you by a second express this afternoon,) when you reflect that this money is absolutely committed to my charge for a special purpose, and that I stand accountable for the execution of this commission. Your Excellency must likewise be sensible that you cannot have the disposal of it, as it was obtained without either your knowledge or concurrence by Colonel Laurens, appointed special Minister for that purpose. These considerations, and the knowledge I have how much America must suffer from a disappointment in this supply, about to be transported by so excellent a conveyance, must plead my excuse individually for this plain and candid avowal of circumstances, and my determination thereon. I am further persuaded that the Court of France

is not disposed, was there even a shadow of an excuse for an alteration in the allotment of this money, to infringe their honor and injure the essential interests of America by detaining it. I must, therefore, again entreat your Excellency's repeal of those orders to M. Fizeaux, which now detain the ship and supplies so much required in America.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

W. JACKSON.



TO MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON.

Passy, July 5th, 1781, at 6 in the morning.

Sir,

I have this instant received your letter of the 2d, urging the delivery of the money. I must be short in my reply, as your express waits.

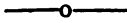
Colonel Laurens indeed obtained a promise of ten millions, to be raised by a loan in Holland. I understood while he was here that that loan was in train, and that the million and a half to be sent with you was a part of it. I since learn that nothing has yet been obtained in Holland, that the success is not yet certain, and that the money in question is a part of the six millions I had obtained before his arrival, upon the strength of which I accepted the bills drawn on his father and on Mr. Jay, and without which acceptances the Congress' credit in America would have been ruined, and a loss incurred of twenty per cent. upon the protests. I cannot obtain more money here at present, and those bills being accepted must be paid, as well as those I accepted on your earnest request, for the great unexpected purchase you made in Holland.

Colonel Laurens has carried two millions and a half of that six millions with him, which will serve till the loan in Holland produces a further supply. In the mean time, I cannot suffer the credit of our country to be destroyed, if, by detaining this money, it may be saved. And if I were to consent to its going, our banker would be obliged to arrest great part of it as belonging to the States, he being in advance for them, which would occasion much disagreeable noise, and very ill consequences to our credit in Europe.

I find by Mr. Viemerange's account just received, that Mr. Laurens's orders have more than absorbed all the money he did

not take with him. I applaud the zeal you have both shown in the affair, but I see that nobody cares how much I am distressed, provided they can carry their own points. I must, therefore, take what care I can of mine, theirs and mine being equally intended for the service of the public. I am sorry to learn that the vessel is detained for this express. I understood by your last that she waited for convoy. I heartily wish you a good voyage, and am, with great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON.

Passy, July 5th, 1781.

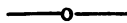
Sir,

I received your letter of the 2d instant, by your first express, this morning at six, answered it, and sent him away immediately. I have just now received your second express of the same date, in which you threaten me with a proceeding that I apprehend exceedingly imprudent, as it can answer no good end to you, must occasion much scandal, and be thereby very prejudicial to the affairs of the Congress.

But I cannot, therefore, consent to suffer their bills, to the amount of more than a million accepted and expected, to go back protested for want of this money. I have nothing to change in the answer abovementioned. You will, however, follow your own judgment, as I must follow mine, and you will take upon yourself the consequences.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON.

Passy, July 6th, 1781.

Sir,

I received and answered two of your expresses yesterday morning, and in the evening I received a third letter from you, all dated the 2d instant.

In this last you tell me "that I must be sensible I cannot have the disposal of the money, as it was obtained without either my knowledge or concurrence, by Colonel Laurens, appointed special

Minister for that purpose." I do not desire to diminish the merit of Colonel Laurens. I believe he would have been glad if it had been in his power to have procured ten times the sum, and that no application or industry on his part for that purpose would have been wanting. But I cannot let this injurious assertion of yours pass, without expressing my surprise that you, who were always with that gentleman, should be so totally ignorant of that transaction. The six millions, of which he took with him two and a half, of which one and a half were sent to Holland, and of which more than the remainder is ordered in stores from hence, was a *free gift* from the King's goodness, (not a *loan* to be *repaid with interest*,) and was obtained by *my application*, long before Colonel Laurens's arrival.

I had also given in a list of the stores to be provided, though on his coming I cheerfully gave up the further prosecution of that business into his hands, as he was better acquainted with the particular wants of the army than I could be, and it was one of the purposes of his appointment.

Thus, no part of the affair was done without my "*knowledge and concurrence*," except the sending a million and a half of the specie to Holland. This was indeed a secret to me. I had heard of that sum being ready there to embark, but I always till lately understood it to be a part of the Dutch loan, which I am about to mention, or I should certainly have opposed that operation. What Colonel Laurens really obtained, and a great service I hope it will prove, was a loan upon interest of ten millions, to be borrowed on the credit of this Court in Holland. I have not heard that this loan has yet produced any thing, and therefore I do not know that a single livre exists, or has existed, in Europe, of his procuring for the States. On the contrary, he and you have drawn from me considerable sums as necessary for your expenses, and he left me near forty thousand livres to pay for the Alliance, and, moreover, engaged me in a debt in Holland, which I understood might amount to about fifteen thousand pounds sterling, and which you contrived to make fifty thousand pounds.

When I mentioned to him the difficulty I should find to pay the drafts, he said, you have the remainder of the six millions. He gave me no account of the dispositions he had made, and it is but lately I have learnt that there is no remainder. To gratify you, and to get that ship out, which could not have stirred without me, I have

engaged for the vast sum abovementioned, which I am sure I shall be much distressed to pay, and therefore have not deserved at your hands the affront you are advised to menace me with.

And since I find you make it a point of reflection upon me that I want to apply money to the payment of my engagements for the Congress, which was obtained by Colonel Laurens for other purposes, I must request that you will, upon this better information, take occasion to correct that error, if you have communicated it to any other person.

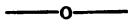
By the letters you showed me, that had passed between Mr. Adams and you, I perceived he had imbibed an opinion that Colonel Laurens had, as he expressed it, done more for the United States, in the short time of his being in Europe, than all the rest of their diplomatic corps put together. I should never have disputed this, because I had rather lend a little credit to a friend, than take any from him, especially when I am persuaded he will make a good use of it; but when his friends will make such supposititious credit a matter of reproach to me, it is not right to continue silent.

As to the safety of the excellent conveyance you mention, I must own I have some doubts about it, and I fear I shall hear of the arrival of that ship in England before she sees America. Be that as it may, I am clear that no use can possibly be made of the money in America for supporting the credit of the States, equal in any degree to the effect it must have for the same purpose, when applied to the payment of their bills here, which must otherwise go back protested. And I am sure it will be exceedingly prejudicial to their credit, if by the rash proceeding you threaten, this situation of their affairs becomes the subject of public talk and discussion in Europe.

I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I request you would read again and consider well my first letter to you on this subject. The reasons therein contained subsist still in their full force.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, July 11th, 1781.

Sir,

The number of Congress bills that have been drawn on the Ministers in Spain and Holland, which I am by my acceptances

obliged to pay, as well as those drawn upon myself, the extreme importance of supporting the credit of Congress, which would be disgraced in a political as well as a pecuniary light, through all the Courts of Europe, if these bills should go back protested, and the unexpected delays arising with regard to the intended loan in Holland, all those considerations have compelled me to stop the one million five hundred thousand livres which were to have been sent by way of Amsterdam. As soon as more money can be furnished to me by this Court, I shall take care to replace that sum, and forward with it as great an addition as possible. I am now soliciting supplies of clothing, arms, ammunition, &c., to replace what has been unfortunately lost in the Marquis de la Fayette, and hope to succeed.

Captain Jackson, who is truly zealous for the service, has been exceedingly solicitous and earnest with me to induce me to permit the money to go in this ship; but, for the reasons abovementioned, I find it absolutely necessary to retain it for the present, which I doubt not will be approved by Congress.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

JAMES LOVELL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, July 21st, 1781.

Sir,

It does not appear that the resolutions of June 26th, affecting yourself and colleagues as well as Mr. Dana, have been transmitted. Mr. President McKean will take other opportunities of writing. I think it essential, however, in the mean time, to forward duplicates, which may serve for information, and perhaps authority to all concerned.

Your humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL,

*For the Committee of Foreign Affairs.*

P. S. Please to give copies where proper.

—o—

TO C. W. F. DUMAS.

Dear Sir,

Passy, August 6th, 1781.

I have received several letters from you lately, enclosing others



for the President of Congress and for Spain, all of which are sealed and forwarded, except the last for the President, contained in yours of the 26th past, which shall go by the first opportunity. The reading of those letters gave me much information, and therefore pleasure; though since the fixing of Mr. Adams there I do not attend so much to the affairs of your country as before, expecting, indeed, but little from it to our advantage; for though it was formerly in the same situation with us, and was glad of assistance from other nations, it does not seem to *feel* for us, or to have the least inclination to help us; it appears to want magnanimity.

Some writer, I forget who, says that Holland is no longer a *nation*, but a *great shop*; and I begin to think it has no other principles or sentiments but those of a shopkeeper. You can judge of it better than I, and I shall be happy to find myself mistaken. You will oblige me, however, by continuing the history, either directly to me, or in your letters to Congress; but when you enclose a sealed letter in another to me, please to observe to place the second seal on one side, and not directly over the first; because the heat of the second is apt to deface the impression of the first, and to attach the paper to it, so as to endanger tearing the enclosed in opening the cover.

With best wishes for your health and prosperity, I am ever, dear sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I pity the writer of the enclosed, though I have no other acquaintance with him than having seen him once at Hanover, where he then seemed to live genteelly and in good credit. I cannot conceive what should reduce him to such a situation as to engage himself for a soldier. If you can procure him any friends among the philanthropists of your country, capable of relieving him, I wish you would do it. If not, and he must go to the Indies, please to give him three or four guineas for me, to buy a few necessaries for his voyage.

B. F.



TO C. W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, August 10th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

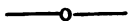
Enclosed I send you a late paper received from Rhode Island. You will see in it the advantages our troops have gained in South

Carolina. Late advices, directly from Philadelphia, say that the enemy have now nothing left in Georgia, but Savannah; in South Carolina, but Charleston; nor in North Carolina, but Wilmington. They are, however, in force in Virginia, where M. de la Fayette has not sufficient strength to oppose them, till the arrival of the reinforcements, which were on their march to join him from Maryland and Pennsylvania.

In looking over my last to you, I apprehend I may have expressed myself perhaps a little too hardly of your country; I foresee you will tell me that we have many friends there; I once thought so, too; but I was a little out of humor when I wrote, on understanding that no loan could be obtained there for our use, though the credit of this kingdom was offered to be engaged for assuring the payment, and so much is lent freely to our enemies. You can best tell the reason. It will be well not to let my letter be seen.

I am ever, dear sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, September 13th, 1781.

Sir,

I duly received the two letters your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me, both dated the 19th of June, together with the letter addressed to the King and the three Commissioners, with the instructions relative to the negociations for peace. I immediately went to Versailles and presented the letter, which was graciously received. I communicated also to Count de Vergennes a copy of your instructions, after having decyphered them. He read them while I was with him, and expressed his satisfaction with the unreserved confidence placed in his Court by the Congress, assuring me that they never would have cause to regret it, for that the King had the honor of the United States at heart, as well as their welfare and independence. Indeed this has already been manifested in the negociations relative to the Plenipotentiaries, and I have had so much experience of his Majesty's goodness to us, in the aids afforded us from time to time, and of the sincerity of this upright and able Minister, who never promised me any thing which he did not punctually perform, that I cannot but think the confidence well and judiciously placed, and that it will have happy effects.

I have communicated to Mr. Adams and to Mr. Jay the purport of your despatches. Mr. Adams already had received the same ; by the first safe conveyance I shall acquaint the Congress with the steps that have been taken in the negotiation. At present I would only say that the settling of preliminaries meets with difficulty, and will probably take much time, partly from the remoteness of the mediators, so that any relaxation of our warlike preparations in expectation of a speedy peace will be imprudent as it may be pernicious.

I am extremely sensible of the honor done me by the Congress in this new appointment. I beg they would accept my thankful acknowledgments ; and since they judge I may be serviceable, though I had requested leave to retire, I submit dutifully to their determination, and shall do my utmost to merit in some degree the favorable opinion they appear to have of me. I am the more encouraged in this resolution, as within the last three months I find my health and strength considerably reëstablished.

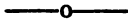
I wish, however, that a consul general may soon be appointed for this kingdom ; it would ease me of abundance of troublesome business to which I am not equal, and which interferes with my own important functions.

The King having graciously complied with my request, of replacing the supplies lost in the Marquis de la Fayette, many hands are employed in providing them, who work hard to have them ready and shipped, so that they may arrive before winter.

With the highest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. The copying machine for Mr. Secretary Thomson is in hand, and will soon be finished and sent to him.



JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

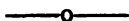
Amsterdam, October 4th, 1781.

Sir,

Your Excellency's letter of June 11th is yet unanswered. I have the honor to agree with your Excellency in opinion, that it is reasonable that articles of rent of the hotel, payment of couriers,

postage of letters, salaries of clerks, stationery for the bureau, and feasts and illuminations made upon public occasions, should be deemed expenses of the States. Indeed, otherwise it will be impossible for American Ministers to live in any such manner as is expected of them, both by Europeans and Americans.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, sir, &c., &c.,  
JOHN ADAMS.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, October 20th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

Congress having lately thought it advisable to alter the arrangement of their great Executive Departments, and to dissolve the Boards and Committees under whose direction they formerly were, I am to inform you, that they have done me the honor to appoint me their Secretary of Foreign Affairs; in which capacity they have made it my duty, as it will always be my inclination, to maintain an intimate and regular correspondence with you. I have this day taken the oaths of office, and as the recital of fortunate events is the most pleasing task annexed to it, I shall give you a short sketch of the state of our military operations.

When General Washington was fully apprized that Count de Grasse was to visit this continent, he made every provision for the attack of New York, where the enemy had about six thousand troops, and seven ships of the line, which were thought inadequate to its defence. He collected the troops, as well those of allies as our own, and made a movement towards New York. The delay of our recruits in coming in, a small reinforcement to the enemy from Europe, and some other circumstances, gave us reason to be apprehensive for the event of this attempt, though the magnitude of the object still urged the General to undertake it. It was the enemy's place of arms, the repository of their magazines, and the only harbor for large ships left them on this side of Halifax. Every preparation was accordingly made, when some circumstances deemed unfortunate at the time, but which, like many others of our supposed evils, have, in the end, been productive of good, occasioned an alteration in the destination of Count de Grasse. He sailed for the Chesapeake. The General, still appearing to prosecute his first

design, moved his army, and made such preparations as induced the enemy to believe that he meant to possess himself of Staten Island, as preparatory to his design upon New York.

In the mean time the army filed off through Hackensack and Newark, to keep up the deception, and arrived by expeditious marches at the head of the Elk. Count de Grasse arrived at the critical moment; and Cornwallis, at the head of about seven thousand men, found himself completely invested at Yorktown by an army of near fourteen thousand regular troops. The British fleet, which arrived at New York about the time that Count de Grasse reached the Chesapeake, made an ineffectual attempt to relieve their army. They were defeated, and compelled to return to New York, after losing the *Terrible*, a seventy-four, and two frigates; by which means a junction of the fleet from Rhode Island was formed with that under the Count de Grasse. It arrived the day after the action, and narrowly escaped falling in with the English fleet.

Our batteries were opened on the 7th. The enemy, having evacuated their principal outworks, and been repulsed in one or two sallies, our second parallel was begun on the 11th, within three hundred yards of their lines; and the least sanguine among the officers fix the end of the month as the era of Cornwallis's captivity. His whole force at York, and on the opposite side of the river, including seamen and regulars, amounts to about seven thousand men.

The enemy sailed from Sandy Hook yesterday, with twenty-three ships of the line, and three fifties, with several frigates, and a number of fire-ships. They have nine thousand of their best troops, if we are rightly informed, on board their ships of war. They are resolved to make some attempt for the relief of Cornwallis, whose capture must draw after it the loss of all the posts they hold in the southern States, and the total ruin of their affairs in America. Georgia has reëstablished her government, where the enemy have no other footing than in Savannah. South Carolina is about doing the same. General Greene has very prudently wasted the strength of the enemy, and raised the confidence of the militia by fighting them in detail. His late victory, which I enclose you an account of in his own words, affords the most promising prospect of speedily recovering the possession of that country.

Congress are, however, looking forward to another campaign. They have voted twenty-five thousand men for the ensuing year. These, when raised and appointed, together with the success which has hitherto, and which we may promise ourselves will still continue to attend the allied arms, will enable you to open your diplomatic campaign with great advantage, and permit you, sir, to rejoice in the close of that great work to which you have so sedulously and ably contributed.

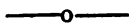
I need not tell you, sir, how anxious I shall be to hear from you on every occasion. Nothing short of the most constant and regular information will satisfy the expectations of Congress. We have much to learn, and but few opportunities of acquiring information. Your situation enables you not only to let us know what passes with you, but to extend your inquiries to Courts where we have no Ministers, and of whose politics we would not choose to be ignorant, though they may but remotely concern us at present. For my own part, I freely confess that I rely much upon your knowledge and experience to supply my want of both.

I propose to write so frequently to you as to keep you fully informed, not only of what is, but of what is not done, since the last may sometimes be as important to you as the first.

As far, sir, as you may find a similar task consistent with your health, your leisure, and your various avocations, you will render us essential services in imposing it upon yourself.

Congress having resolved that all communications with their Ministers abroad shall pass through this office, you will do me the honor, sir, to direct in future all your public letters to me.

I have the honor to be, &c., **ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.**



**ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.**

Philadelphia, October 24th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

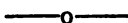
I three days since did myself the honor to write to you, informing you of my appointment to the Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs, and preparing you for the happy event which has taken place. Enclosed you have the capitulation of Yorktown and Gloucester, by which a British army of 5,600 men was surrendered to the allied arms of

France and America ; and no inconsiderable fleet, with 800 seamen, to the navy of his Most Christian Majesty.

Since my last, which was written the day after I entered upon office, I have seen yours of the 14th of May. There are many things in it which deserve the attention I mean to pay it, when the first hurry that the intelligence I communicate occasions is over. But, sir, there is a part which I cannot delay to take notice of, because I feel myself interested in opposing the resolution that you seem to have formed, of quitting the station which, for the honor of the United States, you now hold. I shall be impatient till I hear that you comply with the wishes of Congress on this subject, as communicated long since. Though the new powers with which you are invested impose additional burthens upon you, yet as they at once contain the amplest testimonials of the approbation of Congress, and directly lead to the completion of the great cause in which you so early engaged, I cannot but flatter myself that you will take it upon you. I sent with my first letter to you one to the Count de Vergennes, informing him of my appointment. You will do me the honor to present it.

I am, sir, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



TO THOMAS M'KEAN, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, November 5th, 1781.

Sir,

Herewith you will receive a copy of my last ; since which I have been honored with two letters from the late President, the one dated March 2d, relating to Captain Jones's cross of merit, which I have communicated as directed ; the other, dated July 5th, respecting the release and exchange of Mr. Laurens.

Having no direct communication with the British Ministers, and Mr. Burke appearing, by a letter to me, warmly interested in favor of his friend, General Burgoyne, to prevent his being recalled I have requested and empowered him to negotiate that exchange, and I soon expect his answer. The late practice of sending to England prisoners taken in America has greatly augmented the number of those unfortunate men, and proportionally increased the expense of relieving them. The subscriptions for that purpose in England have

ceased. The allowance I have made to them of sixpence each per week during the summer, though small, amounts to a considerable sum; and during the winter I shall be obliged to double, if not treble it. The Admiralty there will not accept any English in exchange but such as have been taken by Americans, and absolutely refuse to allow any of the paroles given to our privateers by English prisoners discharged at sea, except in one instance, that of fifty-three men taken in the Snake sloop, by the Pilgrim and Rambler, which was a case attended, as they say, with some particular circumstances. I know not what the circumstances were, but shall be glad to see the fifty-three of our people whom they promised to send me by the first cartel. I have above five hundred other paroles solemnly given in writing, by which the Englishmen promised either to send our people in exchange, or to surrender themselves to me in France, not one of which has been regarded, so little faith and honor remain in that corrupted nation. Our privateers, when in the European seas, will rarely bring in their prisoners when they can get rid of them at sea. Some of our poor, brave countrymen have been in that cruel captivity now near four years. I hope the Congress will take this matter into immediate consideration, and find some means for their deliverance, and to prevent the sending more from America. By my last accounts the number now in the several prisons amounts to upwards of eight hundred.

I request also some direction from Congress (having never received any) respecting the allowance to be made to them while they remain there. They complain that the food given them is insufficient. Their petition to the English Government to have an equal allowance with the French and Spanish prisoners has been rejected, which makes the small pecuniary assistance I can send them more necessary. If a certain number of English prisoners could be set apart in America, treated exactly in the same manner, and their exchange refused till it should be agreed to set these at liberty in Europe, one might hope to succeed in procuring the discharge of our people. Those who escape and pass through France to get home put me also to a great expense for their land journeys, which could be prevented if they could be exchanged, as they would be landed here in ports.

The Ambassador of Venice told me, that he was charged by the Senate to express to me their grateful sense of the friendly behavior



of Captain Barry, commander of the Alliance, in rescuing one of the ships of their State from an English privateer, and setting her at liberty; and he requested me to communicate this acknowledgment to Congress. There is a complaint from Holland against Captain Jones, for having taken the brigantine Berkenbosch and sending her to America, and I have been desired to lay before Congress the enclosed depositions relating to that capture, and to request their attention to it.

The Ambassador of Portugal also frequently asks me if I have received any answer to their complaint, long since sent over. I wish it was in my power to give one of some kind or other. But none has yet come to my hands. I need not mention the importance of attending to the smallest complaints between nations, the neglect of them having sometimes very serious consequences.

The mediation proposed is not agreed to by England, who refuses to treat with our United States, but as a sovereign with subjects, and I apprehend that a change in that resolution is only to be expected from time, the growing insupportable expense of the war, or a course of misfortunes in the progress of it. The spirits of that nation have been continually kept up by the flattering accounts sent over, of our being weary of the contest, and on the point of submission. Their Ministers, as appears by their intercepted letters, have been themselves so far deceived as to expect daily those submissions, and to have the pleasure of laying them before the King. We may, perhaps, be able to guess a little by the King's speech at the approaching new session of Parliament, whether they still continue under this delusion. As long as it subsists peace is not to be expected.

A loan has been proposed to be obtained for us of the States of Holland on the credit of this Government. All public operations are slow in that country, and though the affair is at length said to be concluded, it is not yet executed. Considerable advances have, however, been made here in expectation of being reimbursed by it. The last aids granted us have been so absorbed by my payment of the drafts on Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, and acceptance of those for the enormous unexpected purchases in Holland, which were to have gone in Captain Gillon's ship, but left behind, that I shall have nothing to spare for extraordinaries, unless some of the Holland loan comes soon into my hands. I am now told from Amsterdam, that the two ships freighted there to carry those goods are detained, as

their contract was to sail under convoy of the South Carolina, which left them ; and they must now take more men to defend them, and of consequence claim a higher freight, and to have it paid before they sail, unless I will buy the ships, and send them on account of Congress, neither of which is in my power to do. It was with reluctance I engaged in that affair, having little confidence in Captain Gillon's management, and fearing some embarrassment of our credit. I consented in fine to engage for the payment of ten thousand pounds sterling, being the value of the goods suitable for Congress, said to be already shipped in that vessel, and as there was said to be still some room, and she was thought a safe conveyance, I concluded to furnish an additional sum to fill that supposed vacancy, which I limited to five thousand pounds sterling more. You will judge of my surprise, when I saw the accounts of that additional purchase, which amounted, instead of five, to fifty thousand pounds sterling. I at first absolutely refused to pay for them. But Captain Jackson came to me from thence express, urged that the purchase was made by order of Colonel Laurens ; that the goods were on board ; that if I would not undertake to pay for them, they must be relanded, and returned or sold, which would be a public disgrace to us ; that they were all articles exceedingly wanted in America, &c., &c. In fine, I was prevailed on, and accepted the bills, and was obliged to go with this after-clap to the Ministers, a proceeding always disagreeable, after the dispositions of the funds of the year have been arranged ; and more so in this case, as the money was to be paid for the manufactures of other countries, and not laid out in those of this kingdom, by whose friendship it was furnished. This fresh grant was at first absolutely refused ; at length I obtained it, and I hoped the difficulty was over.

But after all, the officers declare the ship was overloaded, that there was not room to lodge the people and provisions, nor to act in fighting her ; the goods are turned out into two other ships, those are left, and it is now proposed to me either to buy them, or to advance a freight nearly equal to their value. I cannot make a new demand for this purpose ; and I shall not wonder if this Government, observing how badly our shipping and transporting the supplies are managed, should take that business for the future entirely into their own hands, as they have begun to do in the case of replacing the cargo of the Marquis de la Fayette, and indeed, till some active,

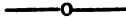
intelligent person, skilled in maritime affairs, is placed here as consul, I cannot but think it will be much better executed, and more for our advantage. Some considerable parts of that new cargo are already shipped, and the rest I hear are in great forwardness.

The very friendly disposition of this Court towards us still continues, and will, I hope, continue forever. From my own inclination, as well as in obedience to the orders of Congress, every thing in my power shall be done to cultivate that disposition; but I trust it will be remembered, that the best friends may be over-burthened; that by too frequent, too large, and too importunate demands upon it, the most cordial friendship may be wearied, and as nothing is more teasing than repeated, unexpected large demands for money, I hope the Congress will absolutely put an end to the practice of drawing on their Ministers, and thereby obliging them to worry their respective Courts for the means of payment. It may have otherwise very ill effects in depressing the spirit of a Minister, and destroying that freedom of representation, which, on many occasions, it might be proper for him to make use of.

I heartily congratulate you, sir, on your being called to the honorable and important office of President, and wish you every kind of prosperity.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, and believe me to be, with great and sincere esteem and respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, November 24th, 1781.

Sir,

Major General du Portail will have the honor to present this Congress, in consideration of their long and faithful services in this country, have granted permission to him and Colonels de Laumoy and de Gourion, to revisit their friends in Europe for the winter.

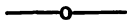
As the merit of these gentlemen has procured for them particular marks of the esteem of Congress, they wish them to be distinguished by the notice of their sovereign, and for that purpose have directed that they be recommended to you, and that you be requested to present them at Court, in such a manner as will bespeak for them the attention they justly merit.

Congress are persuaded that this task will be particularly agreeable to you, as they are indebted to your care for the useful services of these gentlemen, and as nothing is more acceptable to a man of real merit than to be made the means of displaying it in others.

This is the third letter I have had the honor to write to you since my entering upon office, and you will find it numbered in the margin accordingly. I beg you will be pleased to number all your letters to me in the same manner, that I may know those which by any means may be prevented from coming to hand.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, November 26th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

The Marquis de la Fayette, who has obtained leave to revisit his family for the winter, does me the honor to be the bearer of this, and duplicates of two former letters to you. The degree of estimation in which he is held here, you will collect from the enclosed resolutions relative to him, so that you may converse freely with him, and I doubt not that he will be able to satisfy your inquiries on many important questions relative to this country, on which account I may confine myself more to general heads than I would otherwise do.

As to intelligence, there is little of importance, the army all having gone into winter quarters, after the late glorious campaign, the enemy having been defeated on every hand. A party of about six hundred of them, who fell upon the western frontier of New York, were the last that quitted the stage; having been driven off by an inferior number of militia, with the loss of their leaders, and many privates killed, and about fifty, including the wounded, made prisoners. A body of troops is detached to the southward to reinforce General Greene, with orders to attempt Wilmington on their way, which the enemy occupy with about five hundred men, and keep up a connexion with the disaffected counties of North Carolina.

We have not in a long time heard either from you or Mr. Jay, so that we are much in the dark respecting the probable prospect of a negotiation this winter, or rather are led to conclude from your

silence that the prospect is extremely remote; in which case, all your objects will centre in preparing for the ensuing campaign, and directing the operations as far as possible to this country. The success of the combined operations this summer will give great weight to your arguments, especially as they are such as would deserve, independent of that, the most serious attention. But, sir, you will have a difficult card to play to induce France to do what not only our, but her interests essentially require. Never was there a time in which money was more necessary to us than at present. The total abolition of paper, the length of the war, the restricted commerce we have carried on for the first five years of it, the arrears of debts, and the slender thread by which public credit hangs, put it totally out of our power to make any great exertions without the immediate supply of money. Taxation will be carried as far as it can go, but this will fall very far short of our wants. The richest nations in Europe, unable to carry on a war by taxation only, are compelled to borrow. How, then, will it be expected that a nation which has had every difficulty to struggle with, an enemy in the heart of its country, and all its considerable towns at one time or another in their possession, a superior navy on its coasts, and the consequential ruin of its agriculture and commerce, how, I say, can it be expected that such a nation should find resources within itself for so long and bloody a war? And yet, in this situation we are alarmed by our advices from you, by representations from the Minister of France, by assurances from every quarter, that we must expect no further assistance in money. Surely it is not possible that France, after having done so much for us, after having brought us within view of the desired haven, should oblige us to lose the advantage of all she has done; and yet be assured that the most serious consequence may attend her stopping her hand at this critical time. Public credit, which is growing very fast, will drop to the ground. The contracts made for the ensuing campaign must be given up; the troops, who were made to expect pay in specie, will be dissatisfied; and upon the least ill fortune, a failure in supplies will show their discontents; recruiting will be checked, and the conclusion of the war on those advantageous terms, which one vigorous exertion next spring in this country would secure, will be postponed to a later period, when in fact all we wish, to enable us to accomplish these great objects, is less than one year's continuance

of the war will cost France. You will, therefore, show the necessity of setting our credit upon a firm basis, the prospect we have of accomplishing it, from the great confidence in the integrity and abilities of the financier, from the economy which is introduced into our departments, from the industry which money excites, and which a fluctuating medium had destroyed, and from the total debility which must attend another shock to public credit.

You are perfectly acquainted, sir, with the natural resources of the country, you know the value of our exports, and the security they afford for any debt that we may contract; in short, there are a thousand arguments on this subject which will suggest themselves to you, not one of which will you, upon this occasion, omit to urge, since you must be perfectly convinced of its importance in every view, both to France and to us. The Superintendent will write more fully upon this subject, which relates so particularly to his department.

I would beg leave to remind you of another want, which we depend on your representations, and the good dispositions of the Court of Versailles to remove. The chase here seems to be pretty well over, the enemy, tired of running across the country, have taken to their burrows, and the whole business that remains to us, is to take measures for unearthing them next spring. In order to this, ships are absolutely necessary. The situation of New York and Charleston renders them untenable against a naval force, and extremely strong against an attack by land; besides that success in such an operation would not be decisive, since, after putting us to immense expense of men and ammunition of every kind, while they keep the command of the water, they might change their position and be as troublesome as ever. At any rate, the reduction of both these places, from their distance, and the difficulty of removing the men and stores, cannot be effected the same campaign without a naval force, and with it, it will be the business of a few weeks. The advantage to France, independent of her interests as they stand connected with ours, in keeping a great naval force on this continent is obvious.

1st. The expense to which they put the English, by obliging them to maintain an equal force at this distance from home at four times the cost at which the French navy may be maintained in this

country ; which, with proper management, need not exceed what they expend even in France.

*2dly.* The number of seamen they employ in the transport service being so many deducted from what might supply their navy, with the same expense as if so employed.

*3dly.* The protection afforded to the trade on this coast, and the prospect of capturing the enemy's victuallers, and the consequent ruin of their affairs.

*4thly.* But above all, the decided advantage it will afford our combined operations, and the speedy termination of the war, by an advantageous peace. It is true, France may have other objects, which may interfere with these. To this we can say nothing ; she must judge for herself. All we can do is to point out what we conceive will be most useful to her as well as to us, and submit to her determination. It would be well, however, if we were apprized of it as soon as possible.

If a negociation should open this winter, or there should be a probable prospect of it, you will do me the favor to give me the earliest advices of it. There are many delicate points, on which you would like to know the sentiments of people on this side of the water, which I will endeavor to acquaint you with.

I should inform you, that Congress have discharged the Commission for negotiating a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, and taken that burthen from Mr. Adams's shoulders ; that in compliment to the Marquis de la Fayette, they have made him the bearer of a letter to the King of France, which I enclose ; that in answer to your favor of the 11th of June, they have passed the enclosed resolution.

Mr. Morris will write to you on this subject, and enable you to discharge the bills. Should France send a fleet next spring, it would be advantageous to have it unincumbered with such orders as may prevent its taking advantage of circumstances. This has unhappily prevented this campaign from being absolutely decisive. But neither this, nor any other great object can escape your observation, bent as it is upon promoting the happiness of your country.

In order to enable you to meet the claim of the Tories to the property that has been confiscated, I am endeavoring to collect for you an accurate account of the damages wantonly done by the

enemy in this country, which will, at least, serve to set against that claim.

Congress are preparing for an active campaign. They have directed eight millions of dollars to be raised by tax. There is not, however, the least idea that this, or even one half of it, will be collected in the time specified. You will not, therefore, suffer the Court to deceive themselves by hopes of exertions founded on this measure, but urge again and again the absolute necessity of supplying money.

I have conversed so freely with the Marquis de la Fayette on the general state of our politics, that I would rather refer you to him, than trouble you with a longer letter on the subject.

I cannot, however, close this without desiring you to inquire whether any intercepted letters from Mr. Deane to persons in this country have been published in Europe. Rivington has given us many, which are generally believed to be his.

The Marquis will satisfy your inquiries about them.

I am, dear sir, with sentiments of the highest respect and esteem,  
&c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



WILLIAM ALEXANDER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, December 15th, 1781.

My dear Sir,

I told you the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you at Passy, that I would make a trip to London, but had no notion it would be so soon. On coming to town last evening, I found such pressing letters, that I propose setting off this evening, or to-morrow at latest. I would have called, if possible, to receive your commands; but as I am pinched in time, I must content myself with sending for them. The bearer will call for them an hour after receiving this letter.

I shall probably be interrogated about the dispositions in this country to peace. My own idea is, that you seek only your independence; and that *this* country, were that secured, will be moderate in other matters, as the object of the war does not seem to be conquest. Let me know if this is proper language. I notice that a courtly argument has been used in Parliament for continuing the continental war, that withdrawing would make you insolent, and



give France exclusive advantages. Were it not proper that this were contradicted flatly? Any commissions you may have will be taken care of; and I shall be back, barring accidents, in three weeks.

Wishing you every thing that is good, I remain, with equal esteem and respect, dear sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

W. ALEXANDER.



TO WILLIAM ALEXANDER.

Passy, December 15th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

I thank you for informing me of your intended journey. You know so well the prevailing sentiments here, and mine in particular, that it is unnecessary for me to express them; and having never been believed on that side of the water, it would be useless. I will say, however, that I think the language you mention very proper to be held, as it is the truth; though the truth may not always be proper.

Wishing you a good voyage, and happy return to your children, I am, with great esteem, dear sir, yours, &c., &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, December 15th, 1781.

My dear Friend,

I received your favor of September 26th, containing your very judicious proposition of securing the spectators in the opera and play houses from the danger of fire. I communicated it where I thought it might be useful. You will see by the enclosed, that the subject has been under consideration here. Your concern for the security of life, even the lives of your enemies, does honor to your heart and your humanity. But what are the lives of a few idle haunters of play houses, compared with the many thousands of worthy men and honest, industrious families butchered and destroyed by this devilish war? O! that we could find some happy invention to stop the spreading of the flames, and put an end to so horrid a conflagration!

Adieu, I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, December 16th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

Since my last, of which I send you a duplicate by this conveyance, nothing material has happened here, unless it be the evacuation of Wilmington, which is, perhaps, the most important post of communication with the disaffected people of the country of any they have held in America. The Tories of North Carolina possessed a boldness and spirit which were not found elsewhere, and upon occasion appeared openly in arms. They are by these means abandoned to the enemy and the resentment of their country.

The cypher which I shall use with you is No. 4 of those sent by Mr. Morris; in that the duplicate is written which went uncyphered by the Marquis de la Fayette.

I enclose a resolution of Congress for erecting a pillar to commemorate the victory at Yorktown. I must request your assistance in enabling me to carry it into effect, so far as it relates to me, by sending the sketch they require, with an estimate of the expense with which it will be attended. I could wish it to be such as may do honor to the nations whose union it designs to celebrate, and for that reason should think the execution ought to be deferred till our finances are in a better situation than they are at present; but as this lies with Congress only, you will be so obliging as to enable me to do my duty, by laying the sketch before them as soon as you can conveniently get the same executed.

I have also the honor to enclose an ordinance of Congress, which comprises all their former resolutions with respect to captures, with the addition of some others; among them, one for "prohibiting the importation of British goods," unless such as may have been taken from the enemy. This will make some arrangements with the Court of France necessary. The high duties upon prize goods consumed in France render them considerable articles of exportation, and unless some mode is fallen upon to evidence their having been captured, they will be liable to seizure here. I would propose that the Lieutenants of the Admiralty, or some other officers in the sea-port towns, should, to an inventory of the goods shipped, annex a certificate, under hand and seal, of their having been captured from the enemy, and that this should be done without any charge to the

purchaser. You, sir, who are better acquainted with the interior of the Government of France than I can be supposed to be, will be pleased to suggest some mode of executing this business; or if none better presents itself, to use means for carrying what I propose into effect. I send by this conveyance a number of American papers, and beg in return to be favored with those of France, or any new publication that may deserve attention.

I am, dear sir, with great respect and esteem, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

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*Enclosed.*

1. An ordinance, ascertaining what captures on the waters shall be lawful.
2. Resolve, directing the Secretary of Foreign Affairs to prepare a sketch of emblems, &c.
3. Resolves for raising eight millions of dollars, and the proportion of each State.
4. Recommendations to the several States for enacting laws against the infraction of the laws of nations.
5. Letter to Messrs. Wallace, Johnson, and Muir, at Nantes.

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DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, January 2d, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I have received the favor of yours of the 15th of December by Mr. Alexander. I most heartily join with you in the wish that we could find some means to stop the spreading flames of this *devilish war*. I will not despair. The communications which he has imparted to me from you, have revived my hopes of peace. I laid them before the Minister immediately. We are at a suspense for the present upon a very material preliminary. I did intend writing to you at the present pause, that we might make our ground good as we go on, but an accident which has happened obliges me to do it without delay. For having had a most essential question transmitted to me from Lord North for explanation, when I would have applied

to Mr. Alexander, I could not find him ; and now I find that he has left his hotel these four or five days, and his return being uncertain, I must apply to you. I will state to you what has passed.

Upon my first interview with Mr. Alexander, he told me that the late events would make no difference in the prospect of peace ; that America had no other wish than to see a termination of this war ; that no events would make them unreasonable on that subject, which sentiments likewise your letter expresses ; and that no formal recognition of independence would be required. I thought this a very fair opening ; but the next point, which he explained to me, seemed to be still more material towards peace, viz : that America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain, and their allies were disposed to consent to it. I believe that it has been the unfortunate union of common cause between America and France, which has for the last three years turned aside the wish of the people of England for peace. I verily believe (so deep is the jealousy between England and France) that this country would fight for a straw to the last man, and the last shilling, rather than be dictated to by France. I therefore consider this as the greatest rub out of the way. I have often argued this point with you upon former occasions, having at all times foreseen that it would be the greatest rub in the road to peace, and I have often stated it to you as an act of *justice* due to America from her allies, not to drag her through a war of European resentments and jealousies, beyond her original views and engagements ; and moreover, I think the separation of the causes in the negociation promises much the shortest road to a general peace.

Upon Mr. Alexander's opening thus much to me, I told him I would apply for the earliest opportunity of laying these matters before the Minister. Accordingly, on Friday morning, December the 21st, I applied through the means of the Earl of Guilford, father to Lord North, a nobleman of a most respectable character, advanced in years, and attached by every possible tie to a son now in the most arduous situation. I therefore requested the favor through his hands, as giving me the most conciliatory access to the Minister, to whom I was preparing to make an application for peace. After the appointment was made with Lord North for Friday evening, I returned to Mr. Alexander, to consider the specific manner and terms in which I should make my application. It had occurred to me,

from what Mr. Alexander had stated to me, that the conciliatory bill,\* which I had moved in the last Parliament, on June the 27th, 1780, would still serve as a foundation to proceed upon ; I therefore carried it with me.

He told me, that he and you knew the sense of the bill very well, and that it would be entirely consonant to your sentiments that I should state it to Lord North, as drawing an outline for a negociation of peace. However, to avoid all errors, I read the bill through to him, and explained the view of each clause, viz: the style of *Provinces of North America*, a general phrase, to avoid any term denoting dependence or independence ; the truce for an indefinite term ; the articles of intercourse for ten years certain ; to restore an amicable correspondence, and to abate animosities ; the suspension of certain acts of Parliament ; to avoid every possible question of dependence or independence ; and to finish the work, by a ratification of each article of intercourse as agreed to, thereby to prevent all possible return of war. I compared the articles of intercourse for a short term, and their ratification into a permanent peace, to a well known mode of proceeding in the laws of England, by lease and release, from temporary to perpetual amity and peace.

Upon these grounds I took my commission from him for Lord North, viz: the question of dependence or independence *sub silentio*, a separate treaty with America, and to state the conciliatory bill of June, 1780, as the outline of negociation. I saw Lord North in the evening, and stated the foregoing propositions to him, as I have now stated them to you. After having stated the compromise *sub silentio* and the separate treaty, I left with Lord North the copy of the bill of June, 1780, together with a paper entitled *Conciliatory Propositions*, as explanatory of that bill, both enclosed with this. The next morning, viz: Saturday, December the 22d, I saw Mr. Alexander, and reported to him what I had stated to Lord North, and showed him a copy of the paper entitled *Conciliatory Propositions*. He told me that I had executed my commission perfectly to his intelligence of the matter. I should tell you, that at the conclusion of my conversation with Lord North, we both settled jointly the result thus: "I recommend to your lordship the propositions which

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\* See this bill above, pp. 113-115.

I have had the honor of stating to you, as *general grounds of a proposed negociation, leading towards peace, under liberal constructions.*" Lord North said in answer, "so I understand them."

Upon this footing matters rested for some days. On Sunday last, December the 30th, I received a message from Lord North, through the means of Lord Guilford, requesting an explanation of this point, viz: "Who is authorised to treat on the part of America? whether you or Mr. Adams, or both jointly; and whether the propositions above stated would be acknowledged, as general grounds of negociation towards peace, by the person or persons authorised to treat; because it was necessary, before he could lay a matter of so great importance before the Cabinet Council, that he should be entitled to say, these propositions and general outlines come to me from responsible and authorised persons." The moment I received the request of Lord North, I agreed entirely with the necessity of an explanation on that head. I had partly expected such an inquiry; and it gave me satisfaction when it came, as I thought it the first reply towards a parley. If the propositions had not gained some attention, it would have been of very little importance to have inquired whence they came. As to the caution itself, it appears to me not only prudent, but indispensable. The forms of caution in such cases are the essentials of caution. I had determined, on my own account, before this message, to have written to you, that I might have received your sentiments directly from yourself, without any other intervention, that we might proceed with caution and certainty in a matter of such infinite importance. This message has only quickened my despatch. The two points of explanation requested I take to be these: whether the outlines above recited are properly stated, always considering that they imply no further than *general grounds of negociation towards peace, under liberal constructions*; and secondly, by what authorised person or persons any answer on this subject would be accepted; in short, a requisition of credentials preparatory to a formal answer, which is so much the more necessary on the supposition of a favorable reception of the first hint towards negociation.

When I last saw Mr. Alexander, viz: about four or five days ago, he had met with some desponding impressions, as if the Ministry were indisposed to peace, and that things would not do, &c. He did not tell me upon what ground he had formed such apprehension.

However, lest he should have imparted any such by letter to you, I will state that point to you, because it may have infinite ill consequences to be too touchy on such occasions. A premature jealousy may create the very evil it suspects. The Ministry in this country are not every thing. The sense of the people, when really expressed and exerted, would be most prevalent. Suppose, then, it were a proved point, that every man in the Ministry were in his heart adverse to peace. What then? withhold all overtures? By no means. I should advise the very contrary in the strongest manner. I should say, let the overtures be made so much the more public and explicit by those who do wish for peace. It is the unfortunate state of things which has hitherto bound the cause of France to any possible treaty with America, and which has thereby thrown a national damp upon any actual public exertions to procure a negociation for peace with America. I have the strongest opinion that, if it were publicly known to the people of England that a negociation might be opened with America, upon the terms above specified, that all the Ministry together, if they were ill disposed to a man, would not venture to thwart such a measure.

But why should it be supposed that the Ministry, to a man, are ill disposed to peace? Suppose them to be half and half, and the public wish and voice of the people in favor of negociation, it is evident on which side the balance would incline. But why should we seek to throw a damp prematurely upon any chance? Why presume even against any individual? I grant that it would be a bitter trial of humility to be brought to a formal recognition of independence at the haughty command of France, and I believe every part of the nation would proceed to every extremity before they would submit to that. But if that touchy point can be provided for, *sub silentio*, and if the proposed treaty with America may be carried on free from control by France, let us give the cause of peace a fair trial; at the worst we should but be where we were if we should fail. But why should we expect to fail, when the greatest rub is removed, by the liberty of entering separately into a treaty? I think it a most favorable event, leading towards peace. Give us a truce with its concomitants; and a little time so given for cooling will have most excellent effects on both sides. Eternal peace and conciliation may then follow.

I send this to you by the quickest despatch, that we may bring

this point to a fair issue before the meeting of Parliament. God prosper the blessed work of peace.

I am ever yours, most affectionately,

D. HARTLEY.

P. S. *January 8th, 1782.* Since writing this letter, I have seen Mr. Alexander, and shall see him from time to time to communicate with him. I do not suppose I shall have an answer from Lord North till the preliminary points are so settled as to enable him to give an answer in form. The Ministry might undoubtedly give a short negative, if they thought proper; but I do not expect that. You may be assured that I have and shall continue to enforce every argument in the most conciliatory manner to induce a negotiation. I am very sorry for Mr. A.'s confinement, on his own account, and on that of his friends, and because probably in the future state of this business his personal exertions may be very serviceable in the cause of peace. Every assistance and every exertion of mine will always be most heartily devoted to that cause. I have nothing further to add, either upon my own reflections or from my subsequent conversations with Mr. Alexander, to what I have stated in the foregoing letter. If we once make a good beginning upon the plan there stated, I should hope that such a negotiation, founded on such principles, would promise fair to produce every salutary and pacific consequence in the event.

D. H.

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*Remarks on the Conciliatory Bill.*

*In the title and preamble* of the bill, the words *Provinces of North America* are used as general words, neither implying dependence or independence.

CLAUSE I. *The Truce* is taken from the Conciliatory act of 1778, and is indefinite as to the proposed duration of the truce. Under this clause it might be proposed to negotiate three points, viz: the removal of the British troops from the Thirteen Provinces of North America, and connectedly with this article, a stipulation for the security of the friends of the British Government. The third article might be a stipulation, that the respective parties, during the continuance of the truce, should not either directly or indirectly give assistance to the enemies of each other.

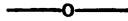


**CLAUSE II. *Articles of Intercourse and Pacification.*** Under this clause some arrangements might be settled for establishing a free and mutual intercourse, civil and commercial, between Great Britain and the aforesaid Provinces of North America.

**CLAUSE III. *Suspension of certain Acts of Parliament.*** By this clause a free communication may be kept open between the two countries, during the negotiation for peace, without stumbling against any claim of rights, which might draw into contest the question of dependence or independence.

**CLAUSE IV. *The Ratification by Parliament.*** The object of this clause is to consolidate peace and conciliation, step by step, as the negotiation may proceed; and to prevent, as far as possible, any return of war, after the first declaration of a truce. By the operation of this clause, a temporary truce may be converted into a perpetual and permanent peace.

**CLAUSE V. *A Temporary Act.*** This clause, creating a temporary act for a specific purpose of negotiation in view, is taken from the act of 1778.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, January 7th, 1783.

Dear Sir,

As it does not appear improbable that the humiliation and misfortunes of Great Britain may produce the same sentiments which a spirit of moderation dictates to the other belligerent Powers, and lead her to concur with them in their wishes for peace, it cannot be improper to acquaint you with the objects America most wishes to attain, and to furnish you with the arguments on which they found their claim to them. For such is the confidence, not only in the justice of his Most Christian Majesty, but in his friendship, that they firmly persuade themselves that he will not only preserve for them their undoubted rights, but that he will even go so far as to procure for them those advantages they may reasonably demand, on the close of a successful war; and I am perfectly satisfied that the loose hints that a detail of their sentiments may afford you, and our other Commissioners, will be strengthened and improved by your lights in such manner as to come before his Majesty in the most advantageous form.

The first point of discussion will be the limits of the United States. The instructions given to Mr. Adams on the        day of        last, explain the wishes of Congress on that subject, nor can they admit of many doubts, except so far as they relate to our southern extent, the boundary between us and Canada being very well ascertained by grants, charters, proclamations, and other acts of Government, and more particularly by the settlements of people, who are engaged in the same cause with us, and who have the same rights with the rest of the subjects of the United States.

Our western and northwestern extent will probably be contested with some warmth, and the reasoning on that subject be deduced from general principles, and from proclamations and treaties with the Indians.

The subject is undoubtedly intricate and delicate, yet, upon candid investigation, I believe it will appear that our extension to the Mississippi is founded in justice; and that our claims are at least such as the events of the war give us a right to insist upon. Your situation furnishing you amply with the various documents on which Great Britain founded her claim to all the country east of the Mississippi previous to the treaty of Paris, I will not trouble you with references to them, which would at any rate be imperfect, from the want which prevails here of books and papers. Taking it for granted that the King of Great Britain was entitled to that extent of country, (which he at least cannot contravene,) it only remains to examine how far he considers it as within the limits of some of the United States, because he can no more pretend to abridge those limits, than claim any other right of which the United States are in possession.

His idea of these limits is apparent from charters granted by the Crown; and from recent grants made by its representatives in several of the States, it appears that they considered their authority to grant lands to the westward as coextensive with the right of Great Britain, unless they were restricted by their interference with other Governments. Upon this principle, the servants of the Crown in New York granted land on the borders of Lake Erie, to the westward of Niagara. And Virginia, even after the proclamation in 1763, patented considerable tracts upon the Ohio, far beyond the Appalachian mountains. It is true, the several Governments were prohibited at different times from granting lands beyond certain limits,

but these were clearly temporary restrictions, which the policy of maintaining a good understanding with the natives dictated, and were always broken through after a short period, as is evinced by the grants abovementioned, made subsequent to the proclamation in 1763. And indeed the proclamation itself furnishes a substantial argument of the opinion of Britain, with respect to the right which some of the States had to extend to the westward of the limits it prescribed, otherwise it would not have been necessary to prohibit their Governors from granting, as their patents would, in such cases, have been invalid, and themselves subjected to the censure of their master upon whom they were dependent. Unless, therefore, these proclamations absolutely destroyed the right, they must be considered as proofs of its existence at least, and after they were issued. The slightest examination of them shows that they did not take away, but restrained an existing right, and the subsequent grants by the Governors evidence that they were, as is before asserted, mere temporary restrictions. The same reasoning applies to the treaty at Fort Stanwix, and to other agreements taken from treaties with the Indians. Strong evidence in our favor is also found in the map made by the King's geographer, in which Virginia and the Carolinas are laid down as extending to the Mississippi, shortly after the last war. Arguments may be drawn against us by the Quebec Bill, but as this is one of the laws that occasioned the war, to build any thing upon it would be to urge one wrong in support of another. But this matter may perhaps be seen in a different light, and our pretensions placed upon a more extensive basis by recurring to general principles, and asking whence Great Britain derived her right to the waste lands in America.

Evidently, from the allegiance which a subject is supposed to carry with him wherever he goes, even though he dislikes his constitution and seeks one that pleases him better, upon this false principle, the oppressed subjects of Great Britain, seeking freedom in the wilds of America, were supposed to extend to it the sovereignty of the kingdom they had left. The rights of the King of Great Britain then to America were incident to his right of sovereignty over those of his subjects that settled America, and explored the lands he claims. For the idea of right derived from mere discovery, and the vain ceremony of taking possession without planting and continuing that possession, is now fully exploded. If then we admit

what is necessary to our independence, that the right of sovereignty over the people of America is forfeited, it must follow, that all rights founded in that sovereignty are forfeited with it ; and that upon our setting up a new sovereign in America, the rights which the first claimed as such, devolve upon the second. Upon this principle, Great Britain is left without a foot of land in America beyond the limits of those Governments which acknowledge her jurisdiction.

It is in vain to say that the King of Great Britain holds these back lands by a cession from other Powers, since those cessions were grounded upon a prior claim, derived through the people of America, and only served to confirm the right which they gave the King of Great Britain while he was their sovereign, and which he loses with his sovereignty over them. This mode of reasoning is warranted by the practice Great Britain uniformly held of treating with the Indian nations through their American governors, who have frequently executed with them the most solemn acts, and sometimes extended the King's protection to the nations who occupy the waste lands, which are the subject of our present claim. The expense of retaining these in friendship almost always devolved upon the respective States, who, till lately, particularly in New York, voted the sums necessary to support smiths among them, and to procure the presents which were annually made them. From hence, then, it follows, that if the King of Great Britain has any right over the back lands in America, it must be as King of the people of America ; ceasing to be King of those people, his right also ceases. If he has no right over the back lands, but merely as protector of the savage nations that inhabit them, that connexion and duty also devolve upon us, since they evidently claimed that protection from him as King of the Colonies, and through the Governors of those Colonies, and not as sovereign of a country three thousand miles from them. This country having chosen a new sovereign, they may rightfully claim its protection.

There is some reason to believe that Great Britain considered their rights in many instances as extending no further than their right of preëmption and protection, as may be inferred from passages in the negociations for a peace with France in the year 1761, referred to in the margin. This suggests a new idea, which, however, I am not warranted by any act of Congress in mentioning, and therefore you will only consider it as the sentiment of an individual. If

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the mediators should not incline to admit our claim, but determine on restricting our limits, either by the extent of our grants, the course of the mountains, the sources of the rivers, or any other of those arbitrary rules that must be sought for when solid principles are relinquished, perhaps it would not be difficult to bring them to agree that the country beyond those limits belongs to the nations which inhabit it; that it should enjoy its independence under the guarantee of France, Spain, Great Britain, and America, and be open to the trade of those whose lands border upon them.

This, though restrictive of our rights, would free us from the well grounded apprehensions that the vicinity of Great Britain and her command of the savages would give us. They already possess Canada and Nova Scotia; should that immense territory, which lies upon the rear of the States, from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, be acknowledged to be vested in Great Britain, it will render our situation truly hazardous. The lands, as you know, are infinitely better than those on the coast; they have an open communication with the sea by the rivers St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, and with each other by those extensive inland seas with which America abounds. They will be settled with the utmost rapidity from Europe, but more particularly from these States. Attachment to the Government, freedom from taxes, a prospect of bettering their fortunes, and the fertility of the soil, will invite numbers to leave us. This, coöperating with the leaven of dissatisfaction, which will continue to work here for many years, may produce the most dangerous effects, especially upon the southern States, which will, from the nature of their soil and husbandry, be thinly settled for many years, while the lands which lie near them, beyond the mountains, will soon be filled with a hardy race of people inimical to them, who to their own strength will be enabled to join that of the savages subject to their command.

If it is an object with the maritime Powers to lessen the power, and by that means diminish the dangerous dominion that Great Britain has in some measure usurped over the ocean, they must prevent her possessing herself of the country in question, since, besides the whole fur and peltry trade that she will thereby engross, the demands of this great country will give a new spring to her manufactures, which, though the Floridas should be ceded to Spain, will find their way into it by the river St. Lawrence, and through

the numerous lakes and rivers which communicate with it. Add to this that settlements are already formed beyond the Appalachian mountains by people who acknowledge the United States, which not only give force to our claims, but render a relinquishment of their interest highly impolitic and unjust. These, and a variety of other reasons, which will suggest themselves to you and the gentlemen joined in the Commission with you, will doubtless be urged in such terms as to convince the Court of France that our mutual interests conspire to keep Great Britain from any territory on this continent beyond the bounds of Canada. Should the Floridas be ceded to Spain, she will certainly unite with you on this point, as the security of that cession will depend upon its success.

The *Fisheries* will probably be another source of litigation, not because our rights are doubtful, but because Great Britain has never paid much attention to rights which interfere with her views.

The arguments on which the people of America found their claim to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland arise, first, from their having once formed a part of the British empire, in which state they always enjoyed, as fully as the people of Britain themselves, the right of fishing on those Banks. They have shared in all the wars for the extension of that right; and Britain could with no more justice have excluded them from the enjoyment of it, (even supposing that one nation could possess it to the exclusion of another,) while they formed a part of that empire, than they could exclude the people of London or Bristol. If so, the only inquiry is, how have we lost this right? If we were tenants in common with Great Britain, while united with her, we still continue so, unless by our act we have relinquished our title. Had we parted with mutual consent, we should doubtless have made partition of our common rights by treaty. But the oppressions of Great Britain forced us to a separation, (which must be admitted, or we have no right to be independent,) and it cannot certainly be contended that those oppressions abridged our rights, or gave new ones to Britain. Our rights, then, are not invalidated by this separation, more particularly as we have kept up our claim from the commencement of the war, and assigned the attempt of Great Britain to exclude us from the fisheries as one of the causes of our recurring to arms.

The second ground upon which we place our right to fish on the

Banks of Newfoundland, provided we do not come within such distance of the coasts of other Powers as the law of nations allows them to appropriate, is the right which nature gives to all mankind to use its common benefit, so far as not to exclude others. The sea cannot in its nature be appropriated; no nation can put its mark upon it. Though attempts have sometimes been made to set up an empire over it, they have been considered as unjust usurpations, and resisted as such, in turn, by every maritime nation in Europe. The idea of such empire is now fully exploded by the best writers.

The whale fishery in every sea, and even upon the coasts of princes who do not exercise it themselves, is considered as a common right, and is enjoyed by those nations that choose to pursue it. The cod fishery, upon the Dogger Bank, and other parts of the European seas, is claimed exclusively by no nation. The herring fishery is carried on daily by the Dutch on the coast of England; and if the Banks of Newfoundland are not equally common, it is because some nations have relinquished their rights, and others find it impossible to exercise them, for want of harbors to receive their vessels, or shores to dry their fish on.

When we say we are willing to exercise it under these inconveniences, there can certainly be no further dispute about our right, and the only remaining questions will be the distance that we ought to keep from the shores possessed by the enemy; though, strictly speaking, from our first principle, we have a common right in them.

This subject is treated so much at large by Grotius and Vattel, that I do not think it necessary to detail arguments, which, though urged by people here from their feelings, you will find much better stated there. Give me leave, however, to urge some that may arise from our particular circumstances. All the New England States are much interested in this point—the State of Massachusetts more particularly. It has no staple; it does not raise its own bread; its principal commerce consisted, before the war, in fish, which it supplied to the rest of the continent in exchange for rice, flour, &c., and to the West Indies for rum, sugar, and molasses. It shipped little to Europe; first, because it could not fish so cheap as the people of England; secondly, because their fish was not so well cured in general, owing to their fishing at improper seasons, and to

their using salt which is said to be of a more harsh nature than what the European vessels bring out with them. Should this State and New Hampshire, which is almost in similar circumstances, be excluded from the fisheries, they must be reduced to great distress. It will be impossible for them to pay for the necessaries they must receive from abroad. They will see with pain their sister States in the full enjoyment of the benefits which will result from their independence, while their own commerce is checked, and their State impoverished. They will consider their interests as sacrificed to the happiness of others; and can hardly forbear to foster that discontent which may be productive of disunion and the most dangerous divisions.

An idea has also gone forth, and it is fomented by the disaffected, that France wishes, from interested views, to monopolise the fisheries; or at least to exclude all other competitors but Great Britain. Those who have attended to the disinterested conduct of France during the war, oppose to this sentiment the honor and good faith of their ally, the little interest that he can have in excluding a people from a right which would not interfere with his, since France does little more than supply herself; and the New England fishery, for the most part, only supplies the continent and islands of America. They see the care with which France has endeavored to cultivate a good understanding between that kingdom and these States, and they are persuaded so inconsiderable an object will not be put in competition with the harmony which ought to subsist between them, or administer food to those unworthy jealousies. And so much does this sentiment prevail in Congress, that their prospects have not induced them to alter your instructions; more particularly as they have received through the Minister of France assurances that his Majesty was pleased with the proofs Congress had given him of their confidence, and that he would in no event make any sacrifices of their essential interests which necessity should not compel him to do; that he had no reason to apprehend, from the events of the war, that such necessity would exist. These events have become so much more favorable since the date of the letter which contained these assurances, that Congress persuade themselves his Majesty will not be driven to make sacrifices equally painful to him and injurious to us; but that, as we owe our success in war to his magnanimity



and generosity, we may be equally indebted to his justice and firmness for an honorable peace.

It is not improbable that Great Britain will endeavor to make some stipulations in favor of their American partizans, who have been banished the country, or whose property has been forfeited. You will doubtless be sensible of the inconvenience and danger to which their return will subject us, and the injustice of restoring to them what they had so justly forfeited; while no compensation is made to us for the loss of property, and the calamities they have occasioned.

There can be little doubt that every society may rightfully banish from among them those who aim at its subversion, and forfeit the property, which they can only be entitled to by the laws, and under the protection of the society, which they attempt to destroy. Without troubling you, therefore, on the point of right, I will just mention a few of the consequences that would result from a stipulation in their favor.

In the first place, it will excite general dissatisfaction and tumults. They are considered here as the authors of the war. Those who have lost relations and friends by it, those who have been insulted by them while starving in prisons and prison-ships, those who have been robbed and plundered, or who have had their houses burned and their families ill treated by them, will, in despite of all law, or treaties, avenge themselves, if the real or supposed authors of these calamities ever put themselves in their power; nor will the Government be able to prevent what the feeling of the body of the people will justify.

Should they be permitted to reside among us, they will neglect no means to injure and subvert our Constitution and government, and to sow divisions among us in order to pave the way for the introduction of the old system. They will be dangerous partizans of the enemy, equally unfriendly to France and to us, and will show themselves such upon every occasion. To restore their property in many instances is now become impossible. It has been sold from hand to hand; the money arising from it has been sunk by depreciation in the public Treasury. To raise the value by taxes, or to wrest the lands from the hands of the proprietors, is equally unjust, and impossible. Many of the very people who would demand the restitution,

have grown rich by the spoil and plunder of this country. Many others, who were beggars at the beginning of this war, owe their present affluence to the same cause.

So that at least the account between the two nations should be liquidated, before any claim can be set up by the aggressors. How far it will be possible to obtain a compensation for the injuries wantonly done by the enemy, you will be best able to judge; be assured that it is anxiously desired.

Give me leave to mention to you the necessity of stipulating for the safe delivery of all records, and other papers of a public and private nature, which the enemy have possessed themselves of; particularly of the records of New York, which Mr. Tryon sent to England; and the private papers of many gentlemen of the law in different parts of the continent, by which the rights of individuals may be materially affected.

Thus, sir, I have touched upon the principal points that America wishes to attain in the peace which must end this bloody war. Perhaps in so doing I have given both you and myself unnecessary trouble, since I have urged nothing but what your own knowledge of the country, and that of the other gentlemen in the Commission, would have suggested to you. However, conceiving that circumstances might render it necessary for you to declare that you spoke nothing more than the prevailing sentiments of your Court, this letter will serve to vouch for the assertion.

Should the Floridas be ceded to Spain, as there is nothing Congress have more at heart than to maintain that friendly intercourse with them which this revolution has happily begun, it will be essential to fix their limits precisely, for which purpose the instructions to Mr. Adams will serve as your directions.

Affairs here are in the same state that they were when I last wrote, except that the enemy in South Carolina have called in all their out-posts and shut themselves up in Charleston, where they will be closely invested when General St. Clair joins, which must have happened about the last of December. The brilliant expedition to St. Eustatia does the highest honor to the Marquis de Bouillé and the French nation. I flatter myself that it will be of singular use in Mr. Adams's negotiations.

I have the honor to be, dear sir, &c., &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, January 15th, 1762.

Dear Sir,

I received a few days since your favor of the 2d instant, in which you tell me that Mr. Alexander had informed you "America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain." I am persuaded that your strong desire for peace has misled you, and occasioned your greatly misunderstanding Mr. Alexander, as I think it scarce possible he should have asserted a thing *so utterly void of foundation*. I remember that you have, as you say, often urged this on former occasions, and that it always gave me more disgust than my friendship for you permitted me to express. But since you have now gone so far as to carry such a proposition to Lord North, as arising from us, it is necessary that I should be explicit with you, and tell you plainly that I never had such an idea, and I believe there is not a man in America, a few English *Tories* excepted, that would not spurn at the thought of deserting a noble and generous friend for the sake of a truce with an unjust and cruel enemy.

I have again read over your conciliatory bill, with the manuscript propositions that accompany it, and am concerned to find that one cannot give vent to a simple wish for peace, a mere sentiment of humanity, without having it interpreted as a *disposition to submit to any base conditions* that may be offered us, rather than continue the war; for on no other supposition could you propose to us a truce of ten years, during which we are to engage not to assist France, while you continue the war with her. A truce, too, wherein nothing is to be mentioned that may weaken your pretensions to dominion over us, which you may therefore resume at the end of the term, or at pleasure; when we should have so covered ourselves with infamy by our treachery to our first friend, as that no other nation can ever after be disposed to assist us, however cruelly you might think fit to treat us. Believe me, my dear friend, America has too much understanding, and is too sensible of the value of the world's good opinion, to forfeit it all by such perfidy. The Congress will never instruct their Commissioners to obtain a peace on such ignominious terms; and though there can be but few things in which I should venture to disobey their orders, yet, if it were possible for them to give me such an order as this, I should certainly refuse to act; I

should instantly renounce their commission, and banish myself forever from so infamous a country.

We are a little ambitious, too, of your esteem ; and as I think we have acquired some share of it, by our manner of making war with you, I trust we shall not hazard the loss of it by consenting meanly to a dishonorable peace.

Lord North was wise in demanding of you some authorised acknowledgment of the proposition from authorised persons. He justly thought it too improbable to be relied on, so as to lay it before the Privy Council. You can now inform him that the whole has been a mistake, and that no such proposition as that of a separate peace has been, is, or is ever likely to be made by me ; and I believe by no other authorised person whatever in behalf of America. You may further, if you please, inform his lordship, that Mr. Adams, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Jay, and myself, have long since been empowered, by a special commission, to treat of peace whenever a negotiation shall be opened for that purpose ; but it must always be understood that this is to be in conjunction with our allies, conformably to the solemn treaties made with them.

You have, my dear friend, a strong desire to promote peace, and it is a most laudable and virtuous desire. Permit me, then, to wish that you would, in order to succeed as a negociator, avoid such invidious expressions as may have an effect in preventing your purpose. You tell me that no stipulation for our independence must be in the treaty, because you “ verily believe, so deep is the jealousy between England and France, that England would fight for a straw, to the last man and the last shilling, rather than be *dictated to* by France.” And again, that “ the nation would proceed to every extremity, rather than be brought to a formal recognition of independence at the *haughty command* of France.” My dear sir, if every proposition of terms for peace, that may be made by one of the parties at war, is to be called and considered by the other as *dictating*, and a *haughty command*, and for that reason rejected, with a resolution of fighting to the last man rather than agree to it, you see that in such case no treaty of peace is possible.

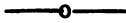
In fact we began the war for independence on your Government, which we found tyrannical, and this before France had any thing to do with our affairs ; the article in our treaty whereby the “ two parties

engage that neither of them shall conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain, without the formal consent of the other first obtained, and mutually engage not to lay down their arms until the independence of the United States shall have been formally or *tacitly* assured, by the treaty or treaties that shall terminate the war," was an article inserted at our instance, being in our favor. And you see, by the article itself, that your great difficulty may be easily got over, as a formal acknowledgment of our independence is not made necessary. But we hope, by God's help, to enjoy it; and I suppose we shall fight for it as long as we are able.

I do not make any remarks upon the other propositions, because I think that unless they were made by authority, the discussion of them is unnecessary, and may be inconvenient. The supposition of our being disposed to make a separate peace I could not be silent upon, as it materially affected our reputation and its essential interests. If I have been a little warm on that offensive point, reflect on your repeatedly urging it, and endeavor to excuse me. Whatever may be the fate of our poor countries, let you and me die as we have lived, in peace with each other.

Assuredly I continue, with great and sincere esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, January 18th, 1762.

Sir,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me this day, enclosing a memorial,\* which relates to the interests of some subjects of the Emperor residing at Ostend, who allege that a ship of theirs has been taken by an American privateer, and carried into Boston, on pretence that the property was English, &c. I shall immediately transmit the memorial to Congress, as desired. But there being Courts of Admiralty established in each of the United States, I conceive that the regular steps to be taken by the complainants would be an application for justice to those Courts by some person on the spot, duly authorised by them as their agent,

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\* See this memorial in Franklin's Works, vol. 5, p. 122.

and in case the judgment of the Court is not satisfactory, that then they appeal to the Congress, which cannot well take cognisance of such matters in the first instance.

The merchants of Ostend may possibly not have as yet correspondents established in all the States, but any merchant of credit in the country would transact such business on receiving their request, with the proper power of attorney; or, if his Imperial Majesty should think fit to appoint a Consul General to reside in those States such an officer might at all times assist his compatriots with his counsels and protection, in any affairs that they might have in that country. I am the more particular in mentioning this to your Excellency, because I apprehend these cases may hereafter be frequent, and if the complaints are to be addressed to you and me, we are likely to have a great deal of trouble, as I am informed that it is become a daily practice for outward bound English ships to put into Ostend, make a formal pretended sale of ship and cargo to a merchant of the place, who furnishes imperial papers for the voyage under his own name, and receives a certain sum per cent. for the operation.

This is said to be a branch of great profit to the Flemish merchants, and that a very great number of English ships are now at sea with such papers; and I suspect even now, from their own manner of stating the transaction, that the ship and cargo reclaimed by the complainants are of that kind. This seems to me an abuse of the neutrality; as these fictitious profits are added to the advantage of real carriage for the belligerent nations, they make it too much the interest of neutral neighbors to foment wars and obstruct peace, that such profits may continue. And if it is to be understood as a settled point, that such papers are to protect English property, the fitters out of privateers from France, Spain, Holland, and America will in another year be all ruined, for they will find none but Flemish ships upon the ocean.

With the greatest respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, January 23d, 1782.

Dear Sir,

An express just going to the Chesapeake, gives me an opportunity

of sending, by the *Hermione*, a resolution passed yesterday. My letters by this conveyance are so long that they leave me nothing to add, unless it be, that we have just received letters from Mr. Deane, (copies are enclosed,) which confirm the authenticity of those published in his name by Mr. Rivington, mentioned in my former letters. In one of those publications he expressly advises a return to the government of Great Britain; and, as this could not be effected through Congress, that it should be done by committees, which the people should choose for that express purpose. These, of which I now send you copies, were delivered here by the person to whom Mr. Deane gave them, so that there can be no doubt of their authenticity.

We have nothing new except what you will learn from the papers herewith transmitted. As I doubt not you are upon the most confidential terms with the Marquis de la Fayette, I could wish him to see my last letter. You will observe, that I have omitted (for reasons that you will easily conceive) to make use of the arguments which may be derived from the 11th and 12th articles of our treaty with France. The Commissioners will exercise their own discretion in applying them, when a negociation shall be opened.

We were much surprised at not receiving a single line by the frigate, which lately arrived at the Chesapeake, from any one of our foreign Ministers. It is upwards of three months since we have had a letter of intelligence from Europe. Congress complains of these neglects, (for such they consider them,) and I flatter myself that in future, as a channel is now open through this office for a regular correspondence, this cause of complaint will be removed, and that letters and papers will be lodged with our consuls to go by every conveyance.

Be persuaded, sir, that I shall omit no opportunity to give you every information which may contribute to your private amusements or the public benefit.

I have the honor to be, &c., ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

P. S. I have this moment received resolutions from Congress, (copies of which I enclose,) which serve to show their sense of the importance of the fisheries and their western extent, and add new weight to the arguments which I had the honor to urge. You will be pleased to transmit copies of them to Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams.

DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, January 24th, 1782.

My dear Sir,

I received yours of the 15th instant this day. I must take the earliest opportunity of setting you right in one mistake, which runs through your whole letter, and which to you, under that mistake, must be a very delicate point. You seem to apprehend that America has been stated in the proposition to Lord North, as "disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain;" but you meet the condition, viz: in the words immediately following, "*and that their allies were disposed to consent to it.*" There cannot possibly be any supposition of treachery to allies, in any proposition to which they may consent. A separate treaty, with the consent of the allies of America, was the proposition communicated to me by Mr. Alexander, and which I laid before the Minister, and which I reported back again to Mr. Alexander in writing, when I showed him the paper entitled "Conciliatory Propositions," which I took care to reduce to writing, with a view of avoiding mistakes; therefore, I have not *misunderstood* Mr. Alexander. I have since seen Mr. A. many times, and he has always stated one and the same proposition, viz: that America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty, because their *allies were disposed to consent that they should*; therefore there cannot exist a suspicion of treachery. It occurred to me once while I was writing, to bar against that misconstruction, but having specified the *consent of the allies of America* in the same sentence, I could not conceive such a misconstruction to have been possible.

You have mistaken another point greatly. You say, "a truce for *ten* years." There is not in the bill any such disposition or thought; on the contrary, it is specified in the enclosed paper that it is kept *indefinite*, for the sole purpose of avoiding the suspicion which you have suggested. The truce may be for twenty, or fifty, or one hundred years; in my opinion the longer the better. But in any case, what I mean now to state is the *indefinite* term in the bill. The articles of intercourse are only proposed for ten years certain, just to strew the way with inviting and conciliatory facilities, in the hope that *a little time given for cooling* would confirm a perpetual peace. If I were permitted to be the mediator, I should certainly



propose the truce for twenty years; but if no more than ten years could be obtained, I would certainly not refuse such a ground of pacification and treaty. I refer you to several of my letters two or three years ago, for the justification of my sentiments on that head.

Another point: look at all my letters since 1778, and see if I have, at any time, suggested any breach of treaty or of honor; on the contrary, I think a faithless nation, if exterminated, would not deserve the pity of mankind. I speak of all I know in the treaty between America and France, and what I think reasonable upon the case itself. If America is further bound than we know of, they must abide by it. I speak to the apparent and public foundation of the treaty, article second, with the provision of *tacitly*, from article eighth; and now I refer you to my letter to you, as long ago as April 10th, 1779: "If beyond this essential and directed end, and upon grounds totally unconnected with that alliance, not upon motives of magnanimity *for the relief of an innocent people*, but from distinct and unconnected motives of private European sentiments, America should be dragged into the consequence of a general European war, she may apply to France the apostrophe of the poet, speaking in the person of Helen to Paris, "*non hoc pollicitus tuæ.*" You see, therefore, that our sentiments have been uniform, and, as I think, reasonable, because I still remain in those sentiments.

Suppose, for instance, (and you may call it the case of a straw, if you please,) that Great Britain and France should continue the war for ten years, on the point of a commissary at Dunkirk, ay or no;—would it be *reasonable*, or a *casus fæderis*, that America should be precluded from a separate treaty for ten years, and therefore involved in the consequential war, after the *essential and direct ends* of the treaty of February 6th, 1778, were accomplished? As far as my judgment goes, upon the knowledge of such facts as are public, I should think it was neither *reasonable* nor a *casus fæderis*. This is the breviate of the argument, in which there is no thought or suggestion of any breach of faith or honor. I did conclude that France was disposed to give their *consent*, because Mr. Alexander informed me so, and because I thought it reasonable that France should consent, and reasonable that America should enjoy the benefit of that consent. I transmitted it to Lord North, as a proposition temperate and pacific on the part of America, and consented to

by their allies; and on no other ground did I transmit or propose it. All that your letter tells me is, "that America will not break with her allies, and that her Commissioners will not entertain such a thought;" but give me leave to add, that they, as honest men, cannot disdain such a thought more than I do. Every honest man ought to disdain the office, or the thought of proposing a breach of faith to them. I have often told you, that such an office or such a thought shall never be mine.

But you have not told me that France would not be disposed to consent to a separate treaty of peace, for that ally whose peace was the original declared object of the alliance, in the case supposed, viz: of certain supposed or real punctillios between two proud and belligerent nations, which might possibly involve America for years in a war totally unconnected with the objects of the alliance. Besides, if any rubs should occur in the road to a general peace, France is too proud a nation to say that, beyond the *policy* of contributing to the separation of America from Great Britain in any contest of rivalry, they cannot meet their rivals in war without the assistance of America. I cannot conceive that the Minister of a great belligerent nation could entertain such a thought, as affecting their own sense of honor, or be so unreasonable to their allies, as to withhold consent to their peace, when *the essential and direct ends* of the alliance were satisfied. Observe, I do not contend against a general peace; on the contrary, I mean to recommend the most prudent means for producing it. But, as an anxious lover of peace, I feel terrors which dismay me, and I consider the dangers which obstruct a general peace, arising from the pride and prejudices of nations, which are not to be controlled in their heat by arguments of reason or philosophy.

Can any man in reason and philosophy tell me why any two nations in the world are called natural enemies, as if it were the ordinance of God and nature? I fear it is too deeply engraved in the passions of man, and for that reason I would elude and evade the contest with such passions. I would strew the road to peace with flowers, and not with thorns. *Haughty*, and *dictating*, and *commands*, are no words of mine; I abhor them and I fear them. I would elude their force by gentle means, and step by step. In article eighth there are the following words: "By the 'treaty or treaties that shall terminate the war.'" Let us have one treaty begun,

and I think the rest would follow. I fear when contending passions are raised, lest we should lose all by grasping at too much.

*January 25th.* I have just seen Mr. Alexander, and have talked the matter over with him. I send you a copy of his sentiments upon it, which, for the sake of avoiding further mistakes, he committed to paper, and which I think justify me in saying that I understood from him that France was *disposed to give their consent*, as he *explained* it to me, and as I explained it to the Minister. He did not say, nor did I understand him to say, that he was *authorised* by the French Ministry, or by any one else, to declare that France had bound herself to consent, or that any such requisition had been made to her; but that it was his opinion that France would consent, and that I might proceed upon that presumption, so far as to recommend overtures of negotiation. Accordingly, the phrase of my letter to you is, that he *explained* to me *that their allies were disposed to consent*. You see what his opinion is on this day; and as you have not told me that France will consent, the *reasonable* probability which still remains with me, for the hopes of opening an amicable treaty, remains as it did.

I could not delay saying thus by the very first mail, upon a point equally delicate to me as well as to yourself. My dear friend, I beg of you not to think, either that you can be considered as capable of entertaining, or that I should be capable of suggesting, any unworthy or dishonorable propositions. If there has been any misunderstanding, it is now cleared up; and the ground for negotiation remains open as before. I therefore still entertain my hopes.

I am ever your affectionate

D. HARTLEY.

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*Explanatory Letter to Mr. Hartley, referred to in the preceding.*

Dear Sir,

As I had not the opportunity of seeing your correspondence at this time, I was unable to prevent the misunderstanding that seems to have arisen. There is no proposition of which I am more convinced, than that "nothing can be done without the concurrence of allies." But as the chief obstruction towards an accommodation seemed to me to lie in the personal character of some who have great weight in this matter, and as the object of the war (the inde-

pendence of America) seems, in the opinion of all men, to be secured, my own opinion was, and still is, that there was so much wisdom and moderation where prejudice prevents us from seeing it, that, provided the ends of the war are accomplished to the satisfaction of all parties, they will be very ready to let us out of it in the most gentle manner, by consenting equally that the business shall go on in one, two, or three separate deeds, as shall be most palatable here; and to doubt that our friends are desirous of finishing the contest with the approbation of their allies, is to doubt their understanding.

I am, with the greatest esteem, yours, &c.,

W. ALEXANDER.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, January 26th, 1782.

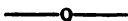
Dear Sir,

I do myself the honor to enclose you a convention for the establishment of Consul, which has just passed Congress. You will find that you are empowered either to sign it in France, or if any alterations are made to send it here to be executed.

Nothing new since I wrote you; we are still in the dark with respect to European intelligence, not having heard from any gentleman in public character since the 5th of October, when we had a short letter from Mr. Carmichael.

I have the honor to be, sir, with great respect and esteem, your most odied, humble servant,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON, SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Passy, January 28th, 1782.

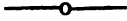
Sir,

I received at the same time your several letters of October 20th, 24th, and November 26th, which I purpose to answer fully by the return of the Alliance. Having just had a very short notice of the departure of this ship, I can only at present mention the great pleasure your appointment gives me, and my intention of corre-

sponding with you regularly and frequently, as you desire. The information contained in your letters is full and clear; I shall endeavor that mine, of the state of affairs here, may be as satisfactory.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

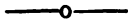
London, February 1st, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I write to you one line by this mail, only to tell you that I have seen the Minister since I last wrote to you, and that he never did entertain the idea one moment of any propositions being thrown out on your part, in the least degree inconsistent with the strictest honor and faith to the allies. I had no occasion to guard against, or to explain any such thought, having at all times conveyed the contrary to him in the most explicit terms. I transmit this to you for your full satisfaction. We have had much conversation on the subject of peace, which you may be sure I have most zealously endeavored to enforce. I should not do him justice, if I did not add that I believe his wishes are for peace, and that he gives the most serious attention to every argument, and to the suggestion of every practicable means on that subject. I have stated many things for his consideration, and for consultation with others, after which I shall see him again. I heartily wish the result may be favorable to the prospect of peace.

I am ever your affectionate,

DAVID HARTLEY.



THE DANISH MINISTER TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Translation.

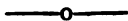
Paris, February 6th, 1782.

Three American vessels, one of which was three masted, and called the Norfolk, Captain Lines, and two brigs, the Ariel, Captain Maller, and the Virginia, Captain Hodshheadson, all three armed in Philadelphia, committed a most grievous outrage on the 2d of December last on the coast of Norway, where they seized two

English merchantmen and burnt them, after plundering them and sending away their crews. The circumstances are more particularly detailed in the protest enclosed, made on the spot.\* It has moreover been proved by the report of his Danish Majesty's grand bailiff at Christiansand, that the aforesaid American vessels having anchored in the port of Fleckeroe, before their meeting with the Englishmen, and displayed French colors, he had asked of the French Consul information respecting their sea papers, and that the latter, on examining their contents, declared that they were not furnished with any letters of marque on the part of Congress. Their conduct proves this also in having burnt their prizes, notwithstanding the offers of ransom made them by the English captains. It therefore follows, that they can only be considered as pirates, whose crimes are greatly aggravated by a manifest infraction of his Danish Majesty's territorial rights.

The undersigned, his Envoy Extraordinary, has received precise orders to communicate these particulars to his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, requesting, with every possible confidence, the intervention of his Most Christian Majesty with the United States of America, to effect not only the punishment of the guilty persons, but also to obtain an indemnification for the vessels and cargoes that were burnt, of which an exact statement shall be furnished; and this satisfaction is due to repair the excesses committed on his Majesty's territory.

DE BLOME.



ROBERT B. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, February 13th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

We have been extremely alarmed at some communications which the Minister of France made me from his last letters. They look extremely as if the Count de Vergennes imagined that neither Spain nor Holland was anxious for our success. They discourage the idea of a loan from them, or even from France. Our letters from Holland confirm these conjectures, so far as they relate to that State. Mr. Adams seems almost to despair of doing any thing with respect

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\* See this protest in Franklin's Works, vol. 5, p. 129.

to an alliance or loan, and from Mr. Jay we have heard nothing in a very long time, and are ignorant of any steps he may have taken since the appointment of M. del Campo to treat with him.

These mortifying disappointments oblige us, though reluctantly, to call upon France for further assistance. Your solicitations will be infinitely useful to your country, if they procure for it what I will venture to pronounce essential to their safety. In this spirit, the instruction which I do myself the honor to enclose, has passed Congress, and a second resolution, which I also enclose, which leads to such information as will enable you to convince the Court of France that their navy can nowhere be more effectually employed to distress the common enemy than in America. I own this consideration is a great relief to my feelings, when we make these importunate demands for money; and I hope it will enable you to press them with some degree of dignity.

That France can aid us is not to be doubted, for it is certain she never carried on a war that distressed her finances less. She has no expensive subsidies to pay; her money is expended either at home, or in a country from which it returns. Her army is not greatly increased, and her commerce, under the protection of her fleets, enjoys a security that it seldom has experienced before. I would not, however, have you suppose that this is the language I hold here. I know too well the necessity of making every exertion which in our present impoverished situation we are capable of; and I neglect no means which my present station puts in my power to call forth.

Congress have taken every wise measure for that purpose, and I firmly persuade myself that we shall be able to form the most vigorous coöperation with such force as his Majesty may please to send out. I am confident that the peace must be made in America. Every blow here is fatal to the grand object of the present war; to the hopes, to the wishes, and to the pride of Great Britain. Other conquests she expects to have restored upon a peace. What is lost here she knows to be lost forever.

The daily complaints that we receive from seamen confined in England concur with humanity and the national honor to render some expedient for their relief necessary. I need not, I am persuaded, recommend this to your particular care. We have not yet obtained, at least as far as I can learn, a compensation for the

prisoners taken by Paul Jones, and returned to England. Is it impossible either to settle a cartel in Europe, or to have the Americans confined there sent to New York for exchange? The last proposition is so much in favor of England, that it would probably be acceded to; and yet such is the distress of the people who have been long confined, that it would be desirable to have the offer made. I am just now applied to by a Mrs. Simmonds, whose husband is the mate of a vessel, and has been two years confined in Mill Prison. It would be an act of charity to attempt to procure his relief. You will do me the favor to collect and transmit a list of the numbers confined in England, and, as far as possible, for the satisfaction of their friends, of the names.

We have not a word of intelligence to communicate, unless it be some little disturbances in the country, which has been distinguished by the names of New Hampshire Grants, and Vermont; and which it may be proper to mention to you, since the facility with which the British deceive themselves, and the address with which they deceive others, may render it a matter of moment in Europe, though, in fact, it is none in America. The bulk of the people of that country are "*New England Presbyterian Whigs.*" Some of those in possession of the powers of Government have more address than principle. Finding themselves exposed to inroads from Canada, they have tampered with that Government, and pretended to be willing to form a treaty of neutrality with them during the war, and to return to the obedience of Britain on a peace. This has had the effect they intended, and in some measure defeated an expedition which the enemy made last year, and retained their main body in inaction at Ticonderoga, while the parties they sent to the westward were beaten and dispersed by our militia. The secret has been discovered, is disavowed by the people, and such measures are now taken, that by the time the King of Great Britain and his Council (before whom the propositions now lie) have formed a plan in consequence of them, they will be made the means of drawing them into new difficulties.

I presume that you keep up a constant correspondence with Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, and assist them with your information and advice. I must beg the favor of you to transmit them this intelligence, that they may be prepared to meet any assertions of the



enemy on that head. I take leave to repeat to you my desire to have the papers and political publications sent regularly to this office.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

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TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, February 16th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

I received your favor of the 24th past. You have taken pains to rectify a mistake of mine relating to the aim of your letters. I accept kindly your replication, and I hope you will excuse my error when you reflect that I knew of no consent given by France to our treating separately of peace, and that there has been mixed in some of your conversations and letters various reasonings to show that, if France should require something of us that was unreasonable, we then should not be obliged by our treaty to join with her in continuing the war. As there had never been such requisition, what could I think of such discourses? I thought as I suppose an honest woman would think if a gallant should entertain her with suppositions of cases in which infidelity to her husband would be justifiable. Would not she naturally imagine, seeing no other foundation or motive for such conversation, that, if he could once get her to admit the general principle, his intended next step would be to persuade her that such a case actually existed. Thus knowing your dislike of France, and your strong desire of recovering America to England, I was impressed with the idea that such an infidelity on our part would not be disagreeable to you, and that you were therefore aiming to lessen in my mind the horror I conceived at the idea of it. But we will finish here by mutually agreeing that neither you were capable of proposing, nor I of acting on, such principles.

I cannot, however, forbear endeavoring to give a little possible utility to this letter, by saying something on your case of Dunkirk. You do not see why two nations should be deemed natural enemies to each other: nor do I, unless one or both of them are naturally mischievous and insolent. But I can see how enmities long

continued, even during a peace, tend to shorten that peace, and to rekindle a war; and this is when either party, having an advantage in war, shall exact conditions in the treaty of peace that are goading and constantly mortifying to the other. I take this to be the case of your "Commissioner at Dunkirk." What would be your feelings if France should take and hold possession of Portsmouth, or Spain of Plymouth, after a peace, as you formerly held Calais, and now hold Gibraltar? or, on restoring your ports, should insist on having an insolent commissioner stationed there, to forbid your placing one stone upon another by way of fortification? You would probably not be very easy under such a stipulation. If, therefore, you desire a peace that may be *firm* and durable, think no more of such extravagant demands. It is not necessary to give my opinion further on that point, yet I may add frankly, as this is merely private conversation between you and me, that I do think a faithful ally, especially when under obligations for such great and generous assistance as we have received, should fight as long as he is able to prevent, as far as his continuing to fight may prevent, his friends being compelled again to suffer such an insult.

My dear friend, the true pains you are taking to restore peace, whatever may be the success, entitle you to the esteem of all good men. If your Ministers really desire peace, methinks they would do well to *empower* some person to make propositions for that purpose. One or other of the parties at war must take the first step. To do this belongs properly to the wisest. America being a novice in such affairs, has no pretence to that character; and, indeed, after the answer given by Lord Stormont, (when we proposed to him something relative to the mutual treatment of prisoners with humanity,) that "*the King's Ministers receive no applications from Rebels unless when they come to implore his Majesty's clemency,*" it cannot be expected that we should hazard the exposing ourselves again to such insolence. All I can say further at present is, that, in my opinion, your enemies do not aim at your destruction, and that, if you propose a treaty, you will find them reasonable in their demands, provided that on your side they meet with the same good dispositions. But do not dream of dividing us; you will certainly never be able to effect it.

With great regard and affection, I am ever, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, February 24th, 1782.

Sir,

You will find enclosed an official despatch,\* which has been sent me from the Court of Copenhagen, respecting some excesses that are said to have been committed near the coast of Norway by three American vessels. I make no doubt but you will take the earliest opportunity to transmit it to Congress, that they may decide agreeably to the principles of the laws of nations upon the claim of his Danish Majesty.

I have the honor, &amp;c.,

DE VERGENNES.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

February 28th, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I have not as yet any thing to communicate to you. I have upon many occasions recommended the road to peace in the most earnest way. I am not without hopes. I think I may venture to say that the arguments which I have stated have made an impression. I have not expected to receive the final answer from Lord North till after the Parliamentary arrangements of the year are settled. I am just for three or four days in the country, upon a little business, but upon a furlough, as I may say, with the knowledge of Lord North, who, during the budget week, cannot possibly want to see me. I have therefore taken that week for a little private business in the country, and if Lord North should happen to wish to see me, my brother keeps watch, and is to send express for me. Public report will tell you that on Friday last there was a division in the House on an American question, of one hundred and ninety-four to one hundred and ninety-three.

I cannot answer for the dispositions of the Ministers, but in point of justice I ought to say that I think, and as far as I can judge from the conferences which I have had, that I have found good dispo-

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\* See above, p. 214.

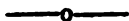
sitions towards peace. I do not pledge myself, because I may be deceived; however, that is my opinion, and I say thus much lest my silence should appear suspicious, and create alienation in other parties. I think I have seen good dispositions from the first commencement of my conferences on peace. My brother sends me word that Mr. Alexander is to return by the next mail. I therefore write this to send either by him, or at least in the same packet. I have had much conversation with him, and he will tell you that I have done my utmost to serve the cause of peace. I will conclude this with a quotation, which I have applied to another person in argument respecting peace:

“*Consulere patriæ, parcere afflictis, ferâ cæde abstinere,  
Irae tempus dare, orbi quietem, seculo pacem suo,  
Hæc summa virtus,—hæc cælum petitur viâ.*”

God bless you and prosper our pacific endeavors. I shall probably write again to you soon.

Your affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.



EDMUND BURKE TO B. FRANKLIN.\*

London, February 23th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

Your most obliging letter demanded an early answer. It has not received the acknowledgment which was so justly due to it. But Providence has well supplied my deficiencies, and the delay of the answer has made it much more satisfactory, than at the time of my receipt of your letter I dared to promise myself it could be. I congratulate you, as the friend of America; I trust, as not the enemy of England; I am sure, as the friend of mankind; on the resolution of the House of Commons, carried by a majority of nineteen, at two o'clock this morning, in a very full house. It was the declaration of

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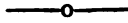
\* This letter was written in answer to one from Dr. Franklin, requesting Mr. Burke to negociate an exchange of Henry Laurens, when in the Tower, for General Burgoyne. Mr. Laurens was at the time under some mistake in regard to this subject, as he supposed that Mr. Burke first applied to Dr. Franklin to effect such an exchange, and imagined that Dr. Franklin neglected him; whereas he took the most prompt and efficient means in his power to procure Mr. Laurens's release. See Henry Laurens's letter, dated May 30th, 1782, Vol. I., p. 716.

two hundred and thirty-four; I think it was the opinion of the whole. I trust it will lead to a speedy peace between the two branches of the English nation, perhaps to a general peace; and that our happiness may be an introduction to that of the world at large. I most sincerely congratulate you on the event. I wish I could say, that I had accomplished my commission. Difficulties remain. But as Mr. Laurens is released from his confinement, and has recovered his health tolerably, he may wait, I hope, without a great deal of inconvenience, for the final adjustment of his troublesome business. He is an exceedingly agreeable and honorable man. I am much obliged to you for the honor of his acquaintance. He speaks of you as I do; and is perfectly sensible of your warm and friendly interposition in his favor.

I have the honor to be, with the highest possible esteem and regard, dear sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

P. S. General Burgoyne presents his best compliments to you, with his thanks for your obliging attentions towards him.



TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, March 3d, 1782.

Sir,

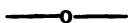
I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me the 24th past, enclosing an official paper on the part of the Danish Court, relating to the burning of some English vessels on the coast of Norway, by three American ships. I shall not fail to transmit the same immediately to the Congress, who will, I make no doubt, inquire into the facts alleged, and do thereupon what shall appear to be just and right, it being their constant and earnest desire to avoid giving any offence to neutral nations, as will appear by their instructions to all armed vessels, of which I have the honor to present a copy.

In the mean time, as it is natural to expect that those who exact a rigorous observation of the laws of nations when their own interest or honor seems affected, should be themselves ready to show an example of their own regard for those laws, where the interest of

others is concerned. I cannot but hope the Court of Denmark will at length attend to a demand long since made by me, but hitherto without effect, that they would restore to the United States the value of three vessels, amounting to fifty thousand pounds sterling. These vessels were fair and good prizes, which had been made by our ships of war, not on the coast of Denmark, but far distant on the high seas, and were sent into Bergen as into a port truly neutral, but there, contrary to the laws of hospitality, as well as the other laws of nations, they were forcibly wrested out of our hands by the Government of that place, and delivered back to our enemies. The Congress have not lost sight of this violence, but constantly expected justice from the equity and wisdom of his Danish Majesty.

I am, with the greatest respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, March 4th, 1782.

Sir,

Since I wrote the two short letters, of which I herewith send you copies, I have been honored with yours dated the 16th of December.

Enclosed I send two letters from Count de Vergennes, relating to certain complaints from Ostend and Copenhagen against our cruisers. I formerly forwarded a similar complaint from Portugal, to which I have yet received no answer. The Ambassador of that kingdom frequently teazes me for it. I hope now that by your means this kind of affairs will be more immediately attended to; ill blood and mischief may be thereby sometimes prevented.

The Marquis de la Fayette was at his return hither received by all ranks with all possible distinction. He daily gains in the general esteem and affection, and promises to be a great man here. He is warmly attached to our cause; we are on the most friendly and confidential footing with each other, and he is really very serviceable to me in my applications for additional assistance.

I have done what I could in recommending Messrs. Duportail and Gouvion, as you desired. I did it with pleasure, as I have much esteem for them.

I will endeavor to procure a sketch of an emblem for the purpose you mention. This puts me in mind of a medal I have had a mind

to strike, since the late great event you gave me an account of, representing the United States by the figure of an infant Hercules, in his cradle, strangling the two serpents; and France by that of Minerva, sitting by as his nurse, with her spear and helmet, and her robe specked with a few *fleurs de lis*. The extinguishing of two entire armies in one war is what has rarely happened, and it gives a presage of the future force of our growing empire.

I thank you much for the newspapers you have been so kind as to send me. I send also to you, by every opportunity, packets of the French, Dutch, and English papers. Enclosed is the last *Courier of Europe*, wherein you will find a late curious debate on continuing the war with America, which the Minister carried in the affirmative only by his own vote. It seems the nation is sick of it; but the King is obstinate. *There is a change made of the American Secretary*, and another is talked of in the room of Lord Sandwich. But I suppose we have no reason to desire such changes. If the King will have a war with us, his old servants are as well for us as any he is likely to put in their places. The Ministry, you will see, declare that the war in America is, for the future, to be only *defensive*. I hope we shall be too prudent to have the least dependence on this declaration. It is only thrown out to lull us; for, depend upon it, the King hates us cordially, and will be content with nothing short of our extirpation.

I shall be glad to receive the account you are preparing of the wanton damages done our possessions. I wish you could also furnish me with one of the barbarities committed on our people. They may both be of excellent use on certain occasions. I received the duplicate of yours in cypher. Hereafter I wish you would use that in which those instructions were written that relate to the future peace. I am accustomed to that, and I think it very good, and more convenient in the practice.

The friendly disposition of this Court towards us continues. We have sometimes pressed a little too hard, expecting and demanding, perhaps, more than we ought, and have used improper arguments, which may have occasioned a little dissatisfaction, but it has not been lasting. In my opinion, the surest way to obtain liberal aid from others is vigorously to help ourselves. People fear assisting the negligent, the indolent, and the careless, lest the aids they afford should be lost. I know we have done a great deal; but it is said

we are apt to be supine after a little success, and too backward in furnishing our contingents. This is really a generous nation, fond of glory, and particularly that of protecting the oppressed. Trade is not the admiration of their noblesse, who always govern here. Telling them their *commerce* will be advantaged by our success, and that it is their *interest* to help us, seems as much as to say, help us, and we shall not be obliged to you. Such indiscreet and improper language has been sometimes held here by some of our people, and produced no good effects.

The constant harmony subsisting between the armies of the two nations in America is a circumstance that has afforded me infinite pleasure. It should be carefully cultivated. I hope nothing will happen to disturb it. The French officers, who have returned to France this winter, speak of our people in the handsomest and kindest manner; and there is a strong desire in many of the young noblemen to go over to fight for us. There is no restraining some of them, and several changes among the officers of their army have lately taken place in consequence.

You must be so sensible of the utility of maintaining a perfect good understanding with the Chevalier de la Luzerne, that I need say nothing on that head. The affairs of a distant people in any Court of Europe will always be much affected by the representations of the Minister of that Court residing among them.

We have here great quantities of supplies of all kinds, ready to be sent over, and which would have been on their way before this time if the unlucky loss of the transports that were under M. de Guichen, and other demands for more ships, had not created a difficulty to find freight for them. I hope, however, that you will receive them with the next convoy.

The accounts we have of the economy introduced by Mr. Morris begin to be of service to us here, and will, by degrees, obviate the inconvenience that an opinion of our disorders and mismanagements had occasioned. I inform him by this conveyance of the money aids we shall have this year. The sum is not so great as we could wish, and we must so much the more exert ourselves. A small increase of industry in every American, male and female, with a small diminution of luxury, would produce a sum far superior to all we can hope to beg or borrow from all our friends in Europe.

There are now near a thousand of our brave fellows prisoners in



England, many of whom have patiently endured the hardships of that confinement several years, resisting every temptation to serve our enemies. Will not your late great advantages put it in your power to do something for their relief? The slender supply I have been able to afford, of a shilling a week to each, for their greater comfort during the winter, amounts weekly to £50 sterling. An exchange would make so many of our countrymen happy, add to our strength, and diminish our expense. But our privateers who cruise in Europe will not be at the trouble of bringing in their prisoners, and I have none to exchange for them.

Generals Cornwallis and Arnold are both arrived in England. It is reported that the former, in all his conversations, discourages the prosecution of the war in America; if so, he will of course be out of favor. We hear much of audiences given to the latter, and of his being present at councils.

You desire to know whether any intercepted letters of Mr. Deane have been published in Europe? I have seen but one in the English papers—that to Mr. Wadsworth—and none in any of the French and Dutch papers; but some may have been printed that have not fallen in my way. There is no doubt of their being all genuine. His conversation, since his return from America, has, as I have been informed, gone gradually more and more into that style, and at length come to an open vindication of Arnold's conduct; and, within these few days, he has sent me a letter of twenty full pages, recapitulating those letters, and threatening to write and publish an account of the treatment he has received from Congress, &c. He resides at Ghent, is distressed both in mind and circumstances, raves and writes abundance, and I imagine it will end in his going over to join his friend Arnold in England. I had an exceeding good opinion of him when he acted with me, and I believe he was then sincere and hearty in our cause; but he is changed, and his character ruined in his own country and in this, so that I see no other but England to which he can now retire. He says that we owe him about £12,000 sterling, and his great complaint is, that we do not settle his accounts and pay him. Mr. Johnston having declined the service, I proposed engaging Mr. Searle to undertake it, but Mr. Deane objected to him as being his enemy. In my opinion he was, for that reason, even fitter for the service of Mr. Deane, since accounts are of a mathematical nature, and cannot be changed by an enemy, while that

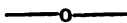
enemy's testimony, that he had found them well supported by authentic vouchers, would have weighed more than the same testimony from a friend.\*

With regard to negotiations for a peace, I see but little probability of their being entered upon seriously this year, unless the English Minister had failed in raising his funds, which it is said he has secured, so that we must provide for another campaign, in which I hope God will continue to favor us, and humble our cruel and haughty enemies; a circumstance which, whatever Mr. Deane may say to the contrary, will give pleasure to all Europe.

This year opens well by the reduction of Port Mahon and the garrison prisoners of war; and we are not without hopes that Gibraltar may soon follow. A few more signal successes in America will do much towards reducing our enemies to reason. Your expressions of good opinion with regard to me, and wishes of my continuance in this employment, are very obliging. As long as the Congress think I can be useful to our affairs, it is my duty to obey their orders; but I should be happy to see them better executed by another, and myself at liberty, enjoying, before I quit the stage of life, some small degree of leisure and tranquillity.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, March 9th, 1782.

Sir,

I have just received the honor of yours dated January the 7th. Your communications of the sentiments of Congress, with regard to many points that may come under consideration in a treaty of peace, give me great pleasure, and the more, as they agree so perfectly with my own opinions, and furnish me with additional arguments in their support. I shall be more particular on this subject in my next, for having notice from Captain Barry last night, that he will not go to Brest, as I expected, to take in some of our goods, but will sail immediately on the return of the post, which sets out to-day, I am obliged to be short.

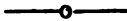
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\* See Deane's Correspondence, Vol. I., p. 159.

You will see in the enclosed newspapers the full debate in the House of Commons, on the subject of declining the war with North America. By private advices I learn that the whole Opposition, now become the majority, went up in a body with the address to the King, who answered that he would pay a due regard to the advice of his faithful Commons, and employ his forces with more vigor against the ancient enemies of the nation, or to that purpose; and that orders were immediately given for taking up a great number of large transports, among which are many old India ships, whence it is conjectured, that they intend some great effort in the West Indies, and perhaps mean to carry off their troops and stores from New York and Charleston. I hope, however, that we shall not, in expectation of this, relax in our preparations for the approaching campaign. I will procure the books you write for, and send them as soon as possible.

Present my duty to the Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



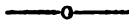
ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, March 9th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

The enclosed letter from the Superintendent of Finance was written in consequence of the resolutions of which I sent you a copy in my last. I then detailed so fully on the subject, that I can give you no further information on that head, than is contained in the enclosed, which, as I was just going out of town, I have requested Mr. Morris to put in his cypher.

I have the honor to be, &c., ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, March 11th, 1782.

My dear Friend,

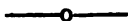
Mr. Digges, who will deliver this to you, informs me, that having been applied to for the purpose of communicating with Mr. Adams, on the subject of his commission for treating of peace, he is now

setting out for Amsterdam, and that he intends afterwards to go to Paris to wait upon you. I understand the occasion to have arisen, by some mention having been made in Parliament by General Conway, of persons not far off having authority to treat of peace, which was supposed to allude to Mr. Adams, and some friends of his in London. The Ministry were therefore induced to make some inquiries themselves. This is what I am informed of the matter.

When the proposal was made to Mr. Digges, he consulted me, I believe from motives of caution, that he might know what ground he had to stand upon ; but not in the least apprized that I had been in any degree in course of corresponding with you on the subject of negotiation. As I had informed the Ministry from you, that other persons besides yourself were invested with powers of treating, I have nothing to say against their consulting the several respective parties. That is their own concern. I shall at all times content myself with observing the duties of my own conduct, attending to all circumstances with circumspection, and then leaving the conduct of others to their own reasons. I presume that Ministry have only done what others would have done in their situation, to procure the most ample information that the case will admit. I rest contented to act in my own sphere, and if my exertions can be applied to any public good, I shall always be ready to take my part with sincerity and zeal.

I am, my dear friend, your ever affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, March 12th, 1782.

My dear Friend,

Enclosed with this I transmit to you the public Parliamentary proceedings respecting the American war. If you will compare these proceedings with some others in several of the counties of this kingdom about two years ago, you will at once see the reason why many persons, who from principles of general and enlarged philanthropy do most certainly wish universal peace to mankind, yet seem restrained in their mode of endeavoring to obtain that object. We must accommodate our endeavors to practicabilities, in the strong hope, that if the work of peace was once begun, it would soon

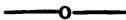
become general. Parliament having declared their sentiments by their public proceedings, a general bill will soon pass to enable Administration to treat with America, and to conclude.

As to the sincerity of the Ministry, that will be judged of by their conduct in any treaty. The first object is to procure a meeting of qualified and authorised persons. You have told me that four persons are empowered by a special commission to treat of peace. Are we to understand that each separately has power to conclude, or in what manner? The four persons whom you have mentioned are in four different parts of the world, viz: three of them in hostile States, and the fourth under circumstances very peculiar for a negociator. When I told Mr. Laurens that his name was in the commission, I found him entirely ignorant of every circumstance relating to it. I understand that the Ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negotiation as soon as the bill shall pass, and therefore it is necessary to consult time, and place, and manner, and persons, on each side. The negotiation itself will speak the rest.

I have been informed that some gentlemen in this country (not in Administration) have lately entered into a correspondence with Mr. Adams, relating to his commission of treating for peace, and that their previous inquiries having been spoken of in public, the Ministry have been induced to make some inquiry themselves from Mr. Adams on that subject. In whatever way a fair treaty may be opened, by whomsoever or with whomsoever, I shall heartily wish good success to it for the common good and peace of mankind. I know these to be your sentiments, and I am confident that they will ever remain so, and hope that you will believe the same of me.

I am, ever, your most affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, March 21st, 1782.

My dear Friend,

You will have heard, before this can reach you, that Lord North declared yesterday in the House of Commons, that his Majesty intended to change his Ministers. The House is adjourned for a few days to give time for the formation of a new Ministry. Upon

this occasion, therefore, I must apply to you to know whether you would wish me to transfer the late negociation to the successors of the late Ministry, in these terms, (*vide* yours to me of January 15th, 1782,) viz: "that you are empowered by a special commission to treat of peace, whenever a negociation for that purpose shall be opened. That it must be always understood that it is to be in conjunction with your allies, conformable to the solemn treaties made with them. That the formal acknowledgment of the independence of America is not made necessary." And may I add, that upon these terms you are disposed to enter into a negociation? It is not known who will succeed the late Ministry, but from the circumstances which preceded its dissolution, we are to hope that they will be disposed to enter into a negociation of peace upon fair and honorable terms. I have no doubt that there were some persons in the late Ministry of that disposition.

I told you in my last letters to you of the 11th and 12th instant, that I had received information, whilst I was in the course of correspondence with the Ministry myself, on the subject of peace, that some part of the Ministry were transmitting some communications or inquiries upon that subject with Mr. Adams, unknown to me. I had informed the Ministry from you of the names of the four persons empowered to treat. I saw the Minister upon the occasion. (I should now call him the late Minister.) I took the liberty of giving him my opinion upon the matter itself. So far as it related personally to me, I expressed myself fully to him, that there was no occasion that such a step should have been taken unknown to me; for that I was very free to confess, that if they thought my partiality towards peace was so strong that they could drive a better bargain through another channel, I could not have any right of exclusion upon them. I relate this to you, because I would wish to have you make a corresponding application to your own case. If you should think *that my strong desire for peace, although most laudable and virtuous in itself, should mislead me*, and that my being as you may suppose misled, may be of any prejudice to the cause committed to your trust, I desire by no means to embarrass your free conduct by any considerations of private or personal regard to myself. Having said thus much, I will now add that I am not unambitious of the office of a peace-maker; that I flatter myself the very page which I am now writing will bear full testimony from both sides of the impartiality

of my conduct. And I will add once more, what I often said and repeated to each side, viz: that no fallacy or deception, knowing, or suspecting it to be such, shall ever pass through my hands.

Believe me, I sympathize most cordially and sincerely with you in every anxiety of yours for peace. I hope things are tending (although not without rubs) yet, in the main, to that end—soon! as soon as the course of human life may be expected to operate on the great scale and course of national events, or rather in the creation and establishment of a new world. I am sometimes tempted to think myself in patient expectation the elder sage of the two; I say the elder, not the better.

Yours, &c.,

D. HARTLEY.



T. DIGGES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Amsterdam, March 22d, 1782.

Sir,

I left England a few days back; and until my conversation and some consultations with Mr. Adams on a matter which will be mentioned to you by him, and more particularly explained in this letter, my determination was to have seen you, as well on that business as on a matter of much consequence to my private reputation. I feel the disadvantages under which I labor when writing to you on a matter which cannot be explained or cleared up but by personal conversation. I do not give up my intended purpose of personally speaking to you; but it being found better and more convenient to my purpose to return immediately hence to England, and from thence to Paris, in preference to going first to Paris, it must be unavoidably delayed for some days.

It would take up more than the length of a letter to explain the whole opening and progression of a matter I am here upon, which was and is meant to be jointly communicated to you with Mr. Adams. I will therefore take the liberty to give you an abbreviation of it in as few words as I can.

About a fortnight ago a direct requisition from the Ministry, through Lord Beauchamp, was made to Mr. R. Penn, to know if he could ascertain *that any person or persons in Europe were commissioned by Congress to treat for peace, whether they were now willing to avail themselves of such commission, and of the present*

*sincere disposition in the Ministry to treat, and whether they would receive an appointed Commissioner to speak for a truce, and mention a place for their meeting, &c.*

Mr. Penn's referring Lord Beauchamp to me, as knowing the nature of Mr. Adams's former commission, was the sole cause of my being privy to, or a party in, the matter. I had various meetings with Lord Beauchamp in company with Mr. Penn on the subject; the particular memorandums of which, and Lord Beauchamp's statement of what the Ministry wanted to obtain, together with every other circumstance relative to the matter, I regularly consulted Mr. Laurens and Mr. D. Hartley upon; and the result was my taking the journey hither, and to Paris, in order to put the questions (as they are before stated from Lord B. to Mr. Penn) and to bring an answer thereto. I am well convinced, by Lord Beauchamp's pledge of his personal honor, as well as from Mr. Hartley's telling me he knew the matter to come directly from Lord North, (for he visited him more than once to ascertain the fact,) that it is a serious and sincere requisition from the Ministry, and that they will immediately take steps to open a treaty, provided I go back with assurances that there is a power vested in Americans in Europe to treat and conclude, and that they are willing to avail themselves of such power when properly applied to.

I have stated the whole transaction to Mr. Adams, read every memorandum I had made, informed him of every circumstance I knew, and when I put the questions (as they are before stated from Lord Beauchamp to Mr. Penn) he replied, "that there were certainly Commissioners in Europe, of which body he was one, who had powers to treat and conclude upon peace; that he believed them willing to enter into such a treaty, provided a proper offer was made; but that no questions now, or to be made in future, could be answered by him, without previously consulting his colleagues, and afterwards acquainting the Ministers of the belligerent Powers thereof." Mr. Adams recommended that any future questions might be made directly to you, for that the present, as well as any subsequent propositions, would be immediately communicated to you and to M. de Vergennes.

His answers to my questions were nearly what I foretold and expected, and are substantially what Lord Beauchamp seemed so anxious to procure. When I relate this answer to his lordship, my



business will be finished in that quarter. I will here explain to you my only motive for being a messenger from him, whom I had never known nor been in company with before. It will enable me to say, "I have done one favor for you, and I claim of you another, viz : to obtain a restoration of my papers from Lord Hillsborough's office, which were in a most illegal and unjustifiable manner seized from me near a twelvemonth ago, and are yet withheld, notwithstanding the personal applications for them from Lord Coventry, Lord Nugent, and Mr. Jackson, each of whom has explained the injury and very extraordinary mischief the want of my papers for so long a time has and is now doing me."

On my first conversation with Mr. Adams, I had concluded to go to you, partly by his advice to do so; but as the expense of two journeys, where one may serve, is of some import to me, and from supposing your answer would be substantially the same as that from Mr. Adams, I have thought it better to go back immediately to London, and then set out for Paris, with the probability of being able to bear my papers.

I will take the liberty to trouble you with another letter, if any thing occurs on my arrival in London. I am to leave this with Mr. Adams for forwardance; and for the present I have only to beg a line acknowledging the receipt of it. If your letter is put under a cover to Mr. Stockdale, bookseller, Piccadilly, London, it will the more readily get to hand.

I am, with great respect, sir, your very obedient servant,

T. DIGGES.

P. S. *Ostend, March 26th.*—On my last visit to Mr. Adams, Friday evening, to explain to him the substance of the foregoing letter, and ask his forwardance of it to you, we had some further conversation on the matter, the ultimate conclusion of which was, that it was thought better I did not send the annexed letter to you, or mention my business with him, until my going in person from England. Mr. Adams's reasons were these: That if I made the communication *then*, he should be necessitated to state the matter in a long letter to you and others of his colleagues; that the matter as it then stood was not of such importance but he could save himself the trouble of the explanation; and that as he recommended any future questions or applications to be made directly to you, your

situation making it more convenient sooner to inform the French Court thereof, he thought my letter had better be postponed, and the substance of it given in person as soon as I could possibly get from London to Paris. I acquiesced, though reluctantly; and having thought much on the matter on my journey hither, I have at length determined to forward the foregoing letter with this postscript, and at the same time to inform Mr. Adams of my exact feelings on the matter, viz: that my wishes and intentions, which, when I left England, were to see and make known the matter to you; that through Mr. Hartley or some other channel you must hear that I had been at Amsterdam, and my seemingly turning my back upon you might be thought oddly of; and finally, that I could not answer for carrying the enclosure from Mr. Hartley back to England, not knowing the consequence it might be of. I hope and think I have done right in this matter.

The purpose for my moving in the business I went to Mr. Adams upon, has, I own, been with a double view of serving myself in a matter of much consequence to me; for, after delivering the explanations I carry, I can with some degree of right, and a very great probability of success, claim as a gratuity for the trouble and expense I have been at, the restoration of my papers, the situation of which I have already explained to Lord Beauchamp, in order to get him to be a mover for them; and I have very little doubt that a few days will restore them to me, and give me an opportunity to speedily speak to you on a matter which gives me much uneasiness, vexation, and pain. Excuse the hurry in which I write, for I am very near the period of embarkation. Paul Wentworth embarked this day for England. I trod on his heels the chief of the way from the Hague, which he left suddenly. General Fawcett is on his road hence to Hanover. T. D.

—o—

JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

The Hague, March 26th, 1782.

Sir,

One day last week I received at Amsterdam a card from Mr. Digges, enclosing two letters to me from David Hartley. The card desired to see me upon business of importance, and the letters from Mr. Hartley contained an assurance that, to his knowledge, the

bearer came from the highest authority. I answered the card that, in the present situation of affairs here and elsewhere, it was impossible for me to see any one from England without witness; but, if he were willing to see me in the presence of Mr. Thaxter, my secretary, and that I should communicate whatever he should say to me to Dr. Franklin and the Count de Vergennes, I should wait for him at home at ten o'clock; but that I had rather he should go to Paris without seeing me, and communicate what he had to say to Dr. Franklin, whose situation enabled him to consult the Court without any loss of time. At ten, however, he came, and told me a long story about consultations with Mr. Penn, Mr. Hartley, Lord Beauchamp, and at last Lord North, by whom he was finally sent to inquire of me if I, or any other, had authority to treat with Great Britain of a truce. I answered, that "I came to Europe with full powers to make peace; that those powers had been announced to the public upon my arrival, and continued in force until last summer, when Congress sent a new commission, containing the same powers, to four persons, whom I named; that if the King of England were my father, and I the heir-apparent to his throne, I could not advise him ever to think of a truce, because it would be but a real war under a simulated appearance of tranquillity, and would end in another open and bloody war, without doing any real good to any of the parties."

He said that "the Ministry would send some person of consequence over, perhaps General Conway, but they were apprehensive that he would be ill treated, or exposed." I said, "that, if they resolved upon such a measure, I had rather they would send immediately to Dr. Franklin, because of his situation near the French Court; but there was no doubt, if they sent any respectable personage, properly authorized, who should come to treat honorably, he would be treated with great respect; but that if he came to me, I could give him no opinion upon any thing without consulting my colleagues, and should reserve a right of communicating every thing to them, and to our allies."

He then said, that "his mission was finished; that the fact to be ascertained was simply that there was a commission in Europe to treat and conclude; but that there was not one person in Great Britain who could affirm or prove that there was such a commission, although it had been announced in the gazettes."

I desired him, and he promised me, not to mention Mr. Laurens to the Ministry without his consent, (and without informing him that it was impossible he should say any thing in the business, because he knew nothing of our instructions,) because, although it was possible that his being in such a commission might induce them to release him, yet it was also possible it might render them more difficult concerning his exchange.

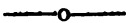
The picture he gives of the situation of things in England is gloomy enough for them. The distresses of the people, and the distractions in Administration and Parliament, are such as may produce any effect almost that can be imagined.

The only use of all this, I think, is to strike the decisive strokes at New York and Charleston. There is no position so advantageous for negociation as when we have all an enemy's army prisoners. I must beg the favor of you, sir, to send me, by one of the Count de Vergennes's couriers to the Duc de la Vauguyon, a copy in letters of your peace instructions. I have not been able to decypher one quarter part of mine. Some mistake has certainly been made.

Ten or eleven cities in Holland have declared themselves in favor of American independence; and it is expected that to-day or to-morrow this Province will take the decisive resolution of admitting me to my audience. Perhaps some of the other provinces may delay it for three or four weeks. But the Prince has declared that he has no hopes of resisting the torrent, and, *therefore*, that he shall not attempt it. The Duc de la Vauguyon has acted a very friendly and honorable part in this business, without, however, doing any Ministerial act in it.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, March 30th, 1782.

Sir,

In mine of the 9th instant I acknowledged the receipt of yours of January 7th, and I have not since received any of later date. The newspapers which I send you by this conveyance will acquaint you with what has, since my last, passed in Parliament. You will there see a copy of the bill brought in by the Attorney General for

empowering the King to make peace with the Colonies.' They still seem to flatter themselves with the idea of dividing us; and rather than name the Congress, they empower him generally to treat with any *body or bodies of men, or any person or persons, &c.* They are here likewise endeavoring to get us to treat separately from France, at the same time they are tempting France to treat separately from us, equally without the least chance of success. I have been drawn into a correspondence on this subject, which you shall have with my next.

I send you a letter of Mr. Adams's, just received, which shows also that they are weary of the war, and would get out of it if they knew how. They had not then received the certain news of the loss of St. Christopher's which will probably render them still more disposed to peace. I see that a bill is also passing through the House of Commons, for the exchange of American prisoners, the purport of which I do not yet know.

In my last, I promised to be more particular with respect to the points you mentioned, as proper to be insisted on in the treaty of peace. My ideas on those points are, I assure you, full as strong as yours. I did intend to have given you my reasons for some addition, and if the treaty were to be held on your side the water, I would do it; otherwise it seems, on second thoughts, to be unnecessary, and, if my letter should be intercepted, may be inconvenient. Be assured I shall not willingly give up any important right or interest of our country; and unless this campaign should afford our enemies some considerable advantage, I hope more may be obtained than is yet expected.

I have purchased for you all the books you desired, except four, which we have sent for to England. I shall request our excellent friend, the Marquis de la Fayette, to take them under his care, and I hope they will get safe to hand. The others shall follow by the first opportunity after I receive them.

Our affairs go on, generally, well in Europe. Holland has been slow, Spain slower, but time will, I hope, smooth away all difficulties. Let us keep up, not only our courage, but our vigilance, and not be laid asleep by the pretended half peace the English make with us without asking our consent. We cannot be safe while they keep armies in our country.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN ADAMS

Passy, March 31st, 1782.

Sir,

I received yours of the 10th instant, and am of opinion with you, that the English will evacuate New York and Charleston, as the troops there, after the late resolutions of Parliament, must be useless, and are necessary to defend their remaining islands, where they have not at present more than three thousand men. The prudence of this operation is so obvious, that I think they can hardly miss it; otherwise I own, that, considering their conduct for several years past, it is not reasoning consequentially to conclude they will do a thing because the doing it is required by common sense.

Yours of the 26th is just come to hand. I thank you for the communication of Digges's message. He has also sent me a long letter, with two from Mr. Hartley. I shall see M. de Vergennes to-morrow, and will acquaint you with every thing material that passes on the subject. But the Ministry, by whom Digges pretends to be sent, being changed, we shall, by waiting a little, see what tone will be taken by their successors. You shall have a copy of the instructions by the next courier. I congratulate you cordially on the progress you have made among those slow people. Slow, however, as they are, Mr. Jay finds his\* much slower. By an American, who goes in about ten days to Holland, I shall send you a packet of correspondence with Mr. Hartley, though it amounts to little.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, March 31st, 1782.

Dear Sir,

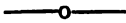
I have just received your favors of March the 11th and 12th, forwarded to me by Mr. Digges, and another of the 21st per post. I congratulate you on the returning good disposition of your nation

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\* The Spaniards.

towards America, which appears in the resolutions of Parliament that you have sent me; and I hope the change of your Ministry will be attended with salutary effects. I continue in the same sentiments expressed in my former letters; but as I am but one of five in the Commission, and have no knowledge of the sentiments of the others, what has passed between us is to be considered merely as private conversation. The five persons are Messrs. Adams, Jay, Laurens, Jefferson, and myself; and in case of the death or absence of any, the remainder have power to act or conclude. I have not written to Mr. Laurens, having constantly expected him here, but shall write to him next post; when I shall also write more fully to you, having now only time to add, that I am ever, with great esteem and affection, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, April 5th, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I wrote a few lines to you the 31st past, and promised to write more fully. On perusing again your letters of the 11th, 12th, and 21st, I do not find any notice taken of one from me, dated February the 16th. I therefore now send you a copy made from it in the press. The uncertainty of free transmission discourages a free communication of sentiments on these important affairs; but the inutility of discussion between persons, one of whom is not authorised, but in conjunction with others, and the other not authorised at all, as well as the obvious inconveniences that may attend such previous handling of points that are to be considered when we come to treat regularly, is with me a still more effectual discouragement, and determines me to waive that part of the correspondence.

As to Digges, I have no confidence in him, nor in any thing he says, or may say, of his being sent by Ministers. Nor will I have any communication with him, except in receiving and considering the justification of himself which he pretends he shall be able and intends to make, for his excessive drafts on me, on account of the relief I have ordered to the prisoners, and his embezzlement of the money.

You justly observe, in yours of the 12th, that the first object is to

procure a "meeting of qualified persons," and that you understand the Ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negotiation as soon as the bill shall pass, and therefore it is necessary to consult time and place, and manner and persons, on each side. This you wrote while the old Ministry existed. If the new have the same intentions, and desire a general peace, they may easily discharge Mr. Laurens from those engagements which make his acting in the Commission improper; and except Mr. Jefferson, who remains in America, and is not expected here, we the Commissioners of Congress can easily be got together, ready to meet yours at such place as shall be agreed to by the Powers at war, in order to form the treaty. God grant that there may be wisdom enough assembled to make, if possible, a peace that shall be perpetual, and that the idea of any nations being natural enemies to each other may be abolished for the honor of human nature.

With regard to those who may be commissioned from your Government, whatever personal preferences I may conceive in my own mind, it cannot become me to express them. I only wish for wise and honest men. With such, a peace may be speedily concluded. With contentious wranglers, the negotiation may be drawn into length, and finally frustrated.

I am pleased to see in the votes and parliamentary speeches, and in your public papers, that, in mentioning America, the word *reconciliation* is often used. It certainly means more than a mere peace. It is a sweet expression. Revolve in your mind, my dear friend, the means of bringing about this *reconciliation*. When you consider the injustice of your war with us, and the barbarous manner in which it has been carried on, the many suffering families among us from your burning of towns, scalping by savages, &c., &c., will it not appear to you, that though a cessation of the war may be a peace, it may not be a reconciliation? Will not some voluntary acts of justice, and even of kindness on your part, have excellent effects towards producing such a *reconciliation*? Can you not find means of repairing, in some degree, those injuries? You have in England and Ireland twelve hundred of our people prisoners, who have for years bravely suffered all the hardships of that confinement, rather than enter into your service, to fight against their country. Methinks you ought to glory in the descendants of such virtue. What if you were to begin your measures of *reconciliation* by setting them at



liberty? I know it would procure for you the liberty of an equal number of your people, even without a previous stipulation; and the confidence in our equity, with the apparent good will in the action, would give very good impressions of your change of disposition towards us. Perhaps you have no knowledge of the opinions lately conceived of your King and country in America. The enclosed copy of a letter will make you a little acquainted with them, and convince you how impossible must be every project of bringing us again under the dominion of such a sovereign.

With great esteem, I am, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, April 8th, 1782.

Sir,

Since my last, an extraordinary revolution has taken place in the Court of England. All the old Ministers are out, and the chiefs of the Opposition are in their places. The newspapers that I send will give you the names as correctly as we yet know them. Our last advices mention their kissing hands, but they had yet done nothing in their respective offices by which one might judge of their projected measures, as whether they will ask a peace, of which they have great need, the nation having of late suffered many losses, men grown extremely scarce, and Lord North's new taxes proposed as funds for the loan meeting with great opposition; or whether they will strive to find new resources, and obtain allies to enable them to please the King and nation by some vigorous exertions against France, Spain, and Holland.

With regard to America, having while in opposition carried the vote for making no longer an offensive war with us, they seem to have tied their own hands from acting against us. Their predecessors had been tampering with this Court for a separate peace. The King's answer gave me great pleasure. It will be sent to M. de la Luzerne, and by him communicated to Congress. None of their attempts to divide us meet with the least encouragement, and I imagine the present set will try other measures.

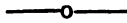
My letters from Holland give pleasing accounts of the rapid progress our affairs are making in that country. The packet from

M. Dumas, which I forward with this, will give you the particulars. The Prince de Broglie will do me the favor of delivering this to you. He goes over to join the French army with the more pleasure as it is employed in the cause of liberty, a cause he loves, and in establishing the interests of America, a country for which he has much regard and affection. I recommend him earnestly to the civilities and services it may be in your power to render him, and I request you would introduce him to the President of Congress, and to the principal members, civil and military.

Our excellent friend, the Marquis de la Fayette, will sail in about three weeks. By that time we may have more interesting intelligence from England, and I shall write you fully.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO HENRY LAURENS.

Passy, April 12th, 1782

Sir,

I should sooner have paid my respects to you by letter, if I had not till lately expected you here, as I understood it to be your intention. Your enlargement gave me great pleasure, and I hope that the terms exacted by the late Ministry will now be relaxed, especially when they are informed, that you are one of the Commissioners appointed to treat of peace. Herewith I send you a copy of the commission; the purport of which you can communicate to the Ministers if you find it proper. If they are disposed to make peace with us and our allies at the same time, I will, on notice from you, send to Mr. Jay to prepare for meeting at such time and place as shall be agreed on.

As to our treating separately, and quitting our present alliance, which the late Ministry seemed to desire, it is impossible. Our treaties and our instructions, as well as the honor and interest of our country, forbid it. I will communicate those instructions to you, as soon as I have the pleasure of seeing you. If you have occasion for money, please to acquaint me with the sum you desire, and I will endeavor to supply you.

With very great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be,  
sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

M. DE RAYNEVAL TO B. FRANKLIN.

## Translation.

Versailles, April 12th, 1782.

Sir,

I have laid before the Count de Vergennes the different letters which Mr. Hartley had written to you, as well as your proposed reply; the Minister has given his entire approbation to the manner in which you have expressed yourself. I subjoin a postscript concerning Mr. Forth; \* the Count de Vergennes, who has given it a perusal, finds that you may without impropriety transmit it to your correspondent.

I have the honor to be, sir, with the most sincere attachment,  
your very humble and obedient servant,

DE RAYNEVAL.

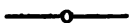
P. S. Since my letter was written, sir, I have considered anew the different overtures which it embraces. In your opinion, the late English Minister sincerely desired a reconciliation with us, and proposed with this view a separate peace. At the time you were transmitting this wish of Lord North to me, this ex-Minister employed an emissary here to sound the Minister of France on the pacific disposition of his Court, and offer very advantageous propositions. You will be able to judge from this, sir, of the opinion which I ought to have of the intention of Lord North and his colleagues. To convince you of the truth of the suggestions which I communicate, I will confide to you that the emissary was a Mr. Forth, and that he was charged to reply to the English Minister, "*that the King of France is as desirous of peace as the King of England; and that he would accede to it as soon as he could with dignity and safety; but it is a matter of the last importance for his Most Christian Majesty to know whether the Court of London is disposed to treat on equal terms with the allies of France.*" Mr. Forth has set out for London with this answer; but it is probable he will not arrive till after the Ministers who have sent him have retired from office.

You may, sir, without the least hesitation, make use of these

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\* Mr. Forth was a secret agent sent over to France by the British Ministry, to propose a separate treaty with the French Court.

details, if you judge it expedient. They will make known to the Minister in place the principles of the Court of France, and they will convince him, I hope, that the project of disuniting us will be as illusory as it will prove injurious to us. As to the reply sent by Mr. Forth, I cannot foresee (if the new Ministers are instructed on this point) in what manner they will think they ought to consider it; if they love peace, as they have persuaded the English nation and all Europe, they need not be embarrassed; France has opened a way in which they can, in my opinion, act without wounding the dignity of their master; if they do not adopt it, they flatter themselves, without doubt, that the chance of war will procure for England the success which heretofore has been denied her; it will be for Providence to crown or frustrate their hopes.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, April 12th, 1782.

Sir,

Being at Court on Tuesday, I learnt from the Dutch Minister that the new English Ministry have offered, through the Ministers of Russia, a cessation of arms to Holland, and a renewal of the treaty of 1674. M. de Berkenrode seemed to be of the opinion that the offer was intended to gain time, to obstruct the concert of operations with France for the ensuing campaign, and to prevent the conclusion of a treaty with America. It is apprehended that it may have some effect in strengthening the hands of the English party in that country, and retard affairs a little, but it is hoped that the proposal will not be finally agreed to. It would indeed render the Dutch ridiculous. A, having a cane in his hand, meets his neighbor B, who happens to have none, takes the advantage and gives him a sound drubbing. B, having found a stick, and coming to return the blows he received, A says, my old friend, why should we quarrel? We are neighbors, let us be good ones, and live peaceably by each other as we used to do. If B is so easily satisfied, and lays aside his stick, the rest of the neighbors, as well as A, will laugh at him. This is the light in which I stated it. Enclosed I send you a copy of the proposition.

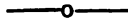
I see by the newspapers that the Spaniards, having taken a little post called St. Joseph, pretend to have made a conquest of the

Illinois country. In what light does this proceeding appear to Congress? While they decline our offered friendship, are they to be suffered to encroach on our bounds, and shut us up within the Appalachian Mountains? I begin to fear they have some such project.

Having seen in the English prints an article from Lisbon, that two American ships, under French colors, being arrived in that port, were seized by the Government, I asked the Portuguese Ambassador if it was true. He said he had no advice of it, as he certainly should have had if such a thing had happened; he therefore did not give the least credit to it, and said we might make ourselves perfectly easy; no such treatment would, in his opinion, be offered us in their ports; and he further observed, on the falsehood of English newspapers, their having lately asserted that the Congress had issued letters of marque for cruising against the Portuguese.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, April 13th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

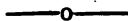
Since mine of the 5th, I have thought further of the subject of our late letters. You were of opinion that the late Ministry desired *sincerely* a reconciliation with America, and with that view a separate peace with us was proposed. It happened that, at the same time, Lord North had an emissary here to sound the French Ministers with regard to peace, and to make them very advantageous propositions, in case they would abandon America. You may judge from hence, my dear friend, what opinion I must have formed of the intentions of your Ministers. To convince you of the truth of this, I may acquaint you that the emissary was a Mr. Forth, and that the answer given him to carry back to the English Ministers was, "*that the King of France is as desirous of peace as the King of England, and that he would accede to it as soon as he could with dignity and safety; but it is a matter of the last importance for his Most Christian Majesty to know whether the Court of London is disposed to treat on equal terms with the allies of France.*"

Mr. Forth went off with this answer for London, but probably

did not arrive till after the dismissal of the Ministers that sent him. You may make any use of this information, as you judge proper. The new Ministry may see by it the principles that govern this Court; and it will convince them, I hope, that the project of dividing us is as vain as it would be to us injurious. I cannot judge what they will think or do in consequence of the answer sent by Mr. Forth, if they have seen it. If they love peace, as they have persuaded the English nation and all Europe to believe, they can be under no difficulty. France has opened a path which, in my opinion, they may use without hurting the dignity of their master, or the honor of the nation. If they do not choose it, they doubtless flatter themselves that a war may still produce successes in favor of England that have hitherto been withheld. The crowning or frustrating such hopes belongs to Divine Providence; may God send us all more wisdom!

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, April 13th, 1782.

Sir,

Enclosed with this I send to your Excellency the packet of correspondence between Mr. Hartley and me, which I promised in my last. You will see that we held nearly the same language, which gives me pleasure.

While Mr. Hartley was making propositions to me, with the approbation or privity of Lord North, to treat separately from France, that Minister had an emissary here, a Mr. Forth, formerly a secretary of Lord Stormont's, making proposals to induce this Court to treat without us. I understand that several sacrifices were offered to be made, and among the rest Canada to be given up to France. The substance of the answer appears in my last letter to Mr. Hartley. But there is a sentence omitted in that letter which I much liked, viz: "*That whenever the two Crowns should come to treat, his Most Christian Majesty would show how much the engagements he might enter into were to be relied on by his exact observance of those he already had with his present allies.*"

If you have received any thing in consequence of your answer by Digges, you will oblige me by communicating it. The Ministers here were much pleased with the account given them of your interview by the Ambassador.

With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, April 23d, 1782.

Sir,

The Baron de Blome has just sent me the annexed memorial, and the only use I can make of it is to communicate it to you, persuaded that you will forward it to Congress.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.

—

*Complaint from Denmark against an American Privateer called the Henry.*

Translation.

The Court of Denmark has been informed that the ship Providence, of Christiana, in Norway, destined from London for St. Thomas, a Danish island, with a cargo of divers merchandize, has been stopped in the latitude of Antigua, by an American privateer called the Henry, Captain Thomas Benson, and has been conducted into a port of New England, under the pretence that the cargo might be English property.

As this act is prejudicial to the credit, security, and liberty of the Danish flag, the underwritten has been charged, by order of his Court, to communicate the same to his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, requesting that he will be pleased to effect, by his intervention, a prompt and entire restitution of the said vessel and cargo, with damages proportioned to the unjust detention; and that he will be kind enough, at the same time, to endeavor to obtain that precise orders be given to the American privateers not to trouble in anywise the navigation and commerce of Denmark, but to respect its flag.

The Court has the greater right to expect this compliance on the part of the Americans, as they continue to enjoy every liberty, and to find every assistance in its American islands, and they will always experience the same kind treatment on the part of Denmark, provided they correspond by proceedings equally amicable.

DE BLOME.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, May 1st, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I have received a packet from you containing several letters of various dates. As I shall probably have a safe opportunity of conveyance to you when Mr. Laurens leaves this country, I am now sitting down to write to you an *omnium* kind of letter of various matters as they occur. The late Ministry being departed, I may now speak of things more freely. I will take a sentence in one of your letters for my text. Vide yours of April 13th, 1782, in which you say, *you were of opinion that the late Ministry desired SINCERELY a reconciliation with America, and, with that view, a separate peace with us was proposed.* I must qualify this sentence much before I can adopt it as my opinion. As to *reconciliation*, I never gave much credit to them for that wish. *It is a sweet expression. It certainly means MORE than peace.* The utmost I ever gave the late Ministry credit for was a wish for peace. And I still believe that the wisest among them grew from day to day more disposed to peace, or an abatement of the war, in proportion as they became more alarmed for their own situations and their responsibility. Had the war been more successful, I should not have expected much relenting towards peace or reconciliation. That this has always been the measure of my opinion of them, I refer you to some words in a letter from me to you, dated January 5th, 1780, for proof—“but for the point of sincerity; why, as to that, I have not much to say; I have at least expected some hold upon their *prudence*.”

My argument runs thus: it is a *bargain* for you (Ministers) to be sincere *now*. Common *prudence* may hint to you to look to yourselves. It has amazed me beyond measure that this principle of common selfish *prudence* has not had the effect which I expected. I have not been disposed to be deceived by any conciliatory profes-



sions, which I considered only as arising from prudence, and I hope that I have not led you into any deception, having so fully explained myself to you on that head. Had the American war been more prosperous on the part of the late Ministry, I do not believe the late resignation would have taken place. But it is evident, from the proposition to the Court of France which you have communicated to me, (and which I have communicated to the present Ministry, with your letter,) that even to the last hour some part of the late Ministry were still set upon the American war to the last extremity; and probably another more *prudent* part of the Ministry would proceed no further; which, if it be so, may reasonably be imputed as the cause of the dissolution of the late Ministry.

These have been the arguments which I have always driven and insisted upon with the greatest expectation of success, viz: *prudential* arguments from the total impracticability of the war, responsibility, &c. I have been astonished beyond measure, that these arguments have not sooner had their effect. If I could give you an idea of the many conferences which I have had upon the subject, I should tell you that many times *Felix has trembled*. When reduced by the terror of responsibility either to renounce the American war, or to relinquish their places, they have chosen the latter, which is a most wretched and contemptible retribution either to their country or to mankind, for the desolation in which they have involved every nation that they have ever been connected with. Peace they would not leave behind them. Their legacy to their country and to mankind has been — *let darkness be the burier of the dead!*

As to the proposal of a separate peace arising from a desire of *reconciliation*, it certainly was so on the part of the people of England; but on the part of the late Ministry it probably arose from the hopes of suggesting to France ideas of some infidelity on the part of America towards them. If you should ask me why I have *seemed* to conspire with this, my answer is very plain. In the first place, if I could have prevailed with the late Ministry to have actually made an irrevocable offer, *on their own part*, of a separate peace to America, that very offer would, in the same instant, have become on their part also a consent to a general peace, because *they* never had any wish to a separate contest with France; and America being out of the question, *they* would have thought of nothing after

that but a general peace. I never could bring them even to this. *They* wished that *America* should make the offer of a separate treaty for obvious views. *My* proposal was, that *they* should offer irrevocable terms of peace to America. If they had meant what they pretended, and what the people of England did really desire, they would have adopted that proposition. Then the question would have come forward upon the fair and honorable construction of a treaty between France and America, *the essential and direct end* of which was fully accomplished. When I speak of Great Britain offering irrevocable terms of peace to America, I mean such terms as would have effectually satisfied the provision of the treaty, viz: tacit independence.

I send you a paper entitled a *Breviate*, which I laid before the late Ministry; and their not having acted upon it was a proof to me that the disposition of their heart to America was not altered, but that all their relenting arose from the impracticability of that war, and their want of success in it. But desponding as they were at last, it was not inconsistent with my expectations of their conduct that they should make great offers to France to abandon America. It was the only weapon left in their hands. In course of negotiating with the late Ministry, I perceived their courage drooping, from time to time, for the last three or four years; and it was upon that ground I gave them credit for an increasing disposition towards peace. Some dropped off, others sunk under the load of folly, and at last they all failed. My argument *ad homines* to the late Ministry might be stated thus: *If you don't kill them, they will kill you.* But the war is impracticable *on your part*; ergo, the best thing you can do, *for your own sake*, is to make *peace*. This was reasoning to men, and through men to things. But there is no measure of rage in pride and disappointment:

"Spicula cæca relinquunt  
Infixa venis, animasque in vulnere ponunt."

So much for the argument of the *breviate*, as far as it respected the late Ministry. It was a test which proved that they were not sincere in their professions. If they had been in earnest to have given the war a turn towards the House of Bourbon, and to have dropped the American war, a plain road lay before them. The sentiments of the people of England were conformable to the

argument of that breviate; or rather I should say, what is the real truth, that the arguments of the breviate were dictated by the notoriety of that sentiment in the people of England. My object and wish always has been to strike at the root of the evil, the American war.

If the British nation have jealousies and resentments against the House of Bourbon, yet still the first step in every case would be to rescind the American war, and not to keep it lurking in the rear, to become hereafter, in case of certain events, a reversionary war with America for unconditional terms. This reversionary war was never the object of the people of England; therefore the argument of the breviate was calculated *bona fide* to accomplish their views, and to discriminate the fallacious pretences of the late Administration from the real wishes of the country, as expressed in the circular resolutions of many counties, in the year 1780, first moved at York, on March 28th, 1780. Every other principle and every mode of conduct only imply, as you very justly express it, a secret hope that war may still produce successes, and then —. The designs which have been lurking under this pretext could not mean any thing else than this. Who knows but that we may still talk to America at last. The only test of clear intentions would have been this, to have cut up the American war, and all possible return to it for any cause, or under any pretext. I am confident that the sentiment of the people of England is, and always has been, to procure peace and reconciliation with America, and to vindicate the national honor in the contest with the House of Bourbon. If this intention had been pursued in a simple and direct manner, I am confident that the honor and safety of the British nation would long ago have been established in a general peace with all the belligerent Powers. These are the sentiments upon which I have always acted in those negotiations, which I have had upon the subject of peace with the late Ministry; reconciliation with America, and peace with all the world, upon terms consistent with the honor and safety of my own country.

Peace must be sought in such ways as promise the greatest degree of practicability. The sentiments of individuals as philanthropists may be overborne by the power of ancient prejudices, which too frequently prevail in the aggregates of nations. In such case, the philanthropist, who wishes the good of his own country,

and of mankind, must be the bulrush bending to the storm, and not the sturdy oak, unavailingly resisting. National prejudices are, I hope, generally upon the decline. Reason and humanity gain ground every day against their *natural* enemies, folly and injustice. The ideas of nations being *natural* enemies to each other are generally reprobated. But still *jealousies* and ancient rivalships remain, which obstruct the road to peace among men. If one belligerent nation will entertain a standing force of three or four hundred thousand fighting men, other nations must have defended frontiers and barrier towns, and the barrier of a neighboring island, whose constitution does not allow a standing military force, must consist in a superiority at sea. It is necessary for her own defence. If all nations, by mutual consent, will reduce their *offensive* powers, which they only claim under the pretext of necessary *defence*, and bring forward the reign of the millennium; then away with your frontiers and barriers, and your Gibralters, and the key of the Baltic, and all the hostile array of nations:

*Aspera compositis nitescant sæcula bellis.*

These must be the sentiments of every philanthropist in his interior thoughts. But if we are not to seek peace by some practicable method, accommodated to the remaining prejudices of the multitude, we shall not in our own time, I fear, see that happy day. If Great Britain and France are ancient rivals, then, until the reign of the millennium shall approach, arrange that rivalry upon equitable terms, as the two leading nations of Europe, set them in balance to each other; the one by land, the other by sea. Give to France her elevated rank among the nations of Europe. Give to Great Britain the honor of her flag, and the security of her island by her wooden walls, and there would be no obstruction to general and perpetual peace. The prejudices of disrespect between nations prevail only among the inferior ranks. Believe me, for one at least, I have the highest sentiments of respect for the nation of France. I have no other sentiments of hostility but what are honorable towards them, and which, as a member of a rival State at war with them, consists in the duty of vigilance which I owe towards the honor and interests of my own country. I am not conscious of a word or a thought, which *on the point of honor* I would wish to have concealed from a French Minister.

In the mode which I have proposed of unravelling the present subjects of jealousy and contest, I would make my proposals openly to France herself. Let America be free, and enjoy happiness and peace forever. If France and Great Britain have jealousies or rivalships between themselves, as European nations, I then say to France, let us settle these points between ourselves, if unfortunately we shall not be able by honorable negociation to compromise the indispensable points of national honor and safety. This would be my language to France, open and undisguised. In the mean while I desire you to observe, that it would not be with reluctance that I should offer eternal freedom, happiness, and peace to America. You know my thoughts too well to suspect that. I speak only as in a state of war, desirous to arrange the complicated interests, and to secure the respective honor of nations. My wishes are, and always have been for the peace, liberty, and safety of mankind. In the pursuit of those blessed objects, not only this country and America, but France herself and the House of Bourbon, may justly claim the conspiring exertions of every free and liberal mind, even among their temporary enemies and rivals.

I am, &c.,

D. HARTLEY.

*Breviate mentioned in the preceding Letter.*

*February 7th, 1782.*—It is stated that America is disposed to enter into a negociation of peace with Great Britain, without requiring any formal recognition of independence; always understood that they are to act in conjunction with their allies, conformable to treaties.

It is therefore recommended to give for reply, that the Ministers of Great Britain are likewise disposed to enter into a negociation for peace, and that they are ready to open a general treaty for that purpose.

If the British Ministers should see any objection to a general treaty, but should still be disposed to enter into a separate treaty with America, it is then recommended to them to offer such terms to America as shall induce her to apply to her allies for their consent, that she should be permitted to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain. The condition of which being the consent of allies, no proposition of any breach of faith can be understood to be required by them, by the requisition of a separate treaty.

The British Ministers are free to make any propositions to America which they may think proper, provided they be not dishonorable in themselves, which, in the present case, is barred by the supposition of consent being obtained. In this case, therefore, if they should be inclined to offer a separate treaty, it is recommended to them to offer such terms to America as should induce her to be desirous of closing with the proposal of a separate treaty, on the grounds of national security and interests, and likewise such as may constitute to them a case of reason and justice, upon which they may make requisition to their allies for their consent. It is suggested, that the offer to America of a truce of sufficient length, together with the removal of the British troops, would be equivalent to that case, which is provided for in the treaty of February 6th, 1778, between America and France, viz: *tacit* independence; and the declared ends of that alliance being accomplished, it would not be reasonable that America should be dragged on by their allies in a war, the continuance of which, between France and Great Britain, could only be caused by separate European jealousies and resentments (if, unfortunately for the public peace, any such should arise) between themselves, independent and unconnected with the American cause. It is to be presumed that France would not, in point of honor to her allies, refuse her consent so requested, as any rivalry or punctilios between her and Great Britain, as European nations, (principles which too frequently disturb the peace of mankind,) could not be considered as *casus fœderis* of the American alliance; and their pride as a belligerent Power would not permit them to claim the assistance of America as necessary to their support, thereby proclaiming their nation unequal to the contest in case of a continuance of a war with Great Britain, after the settlement and pacification with America. Their consent, therefore, is to be presumed. But if they should demur on this point, if Great Britain should be disposed to concede *tacit* independence to America by a long truce, and the removal of the troops, and if the obstruction should evidently occur on the part of France, under any equivocal or captious construction of a *defensive* treaty of alliance between America and France, Great Britain would from thenceforward stand upon advantage ground, either in any negotiation with America, or in the continuance of a war including America, but not arising from any further resentments

of Great Britain towards America, but imposed reluctantly upon both parties by the conduct of the Court of France.

These thoughts are not suggested with any view of giving any preference in favor of a separate treaty above a general treaty, or above any plans of separate but concomitant treaties, like the treaties of Munster and Osnaburg, but only to draw out the line of negotiating a separate treaty, in case the British Ministry should think it necessary to adhere to that mode. But in all cases it should seem indispensable to express some disposition, on the part of Great Britain, to adopt either one mode or the other. An absolute refusal to treat at all, must necessarily drive America into the closest connexion with France, and all other foreign hostile Powers, who would take that advantage for making every possible stipulation to the future disadvantage of British interests, and above all things would probably stipulate that America should never make peace with Great Britain, without the most formal and explicit recognition of their independence, absolute and unlimited.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, May 22d, 1782.

Dear Sir,

I expected to have written you a long letter, more particularly as it is some time since you have received any information from this country, the enemy having effectually blocked up our ports for some months past; but I find myself so extremely hurried, that I have hardly leisure to write this, the vessel by which it is to be sent going sooner than I apprehended.

You will receive herewith a letter to his Most Christian Majesty, which you will present, and a copy, which you will be pleased to deliver to the Count de Vergennes. This I believe is the usual form. You will also receive in the enclosed papers an account of the marks of respect with which the annunciation of the birth of the Dauphin was received. These are of some importance at a time when Great Britain is endeavoring to represent us as weary of the alliance, and anxiously wishing to return to our connexion with them. It is probable that the late changes in the British Adminis-

tration, and the conciliatory measures they propose, may excite apprehensions of our firmness. I have the pleasure of assuring you, that it has not produced the least effect; all orders of people seem to agree that it should redouble our vigilance, and while it argues the weakness of the enemy, it serves as a spring to our exertions.

Sir Guy Carleton, shortly after his arrival, wrote a complimentary letter to General Washington, sending him an account of his appointment, and the prints which contained the parliamentary debates, and requesting leave to send his secretary with despatches to Congress. The General refused the passport, till he had the sense of Congress thereon, and upon Sir Guy's letter being laid before them, they came to the resolution enclosed.

The papers I send you contain, also, resolutions of the State of Maryland, and of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, which I believe speak the language of all the States, which will, I doubt not, make similar declarations when their Legislatures shall be convened. So that you may safely assure his Majesty's Ministers that no art which Great Britain can put in practice will have the least influence in lessening the attachment of the people of this country to the principles of the alliance. It is true their expectations of powerful assistance this campaign are very high. They saw with some pain last year, that the fleet was withdrawn when the enemy were absolutely at their feet, and when one month's stay would have reduced either New York or Charleston. They look eagerly for the return of the fleet. They generally believe this to be the last campaign in America. There is no knowing what effect a disappointment in this hope would have. I believe, from the present view of things, that they would bear it with fortitude, but I should be sorry to see it put to the trial.

Our trade has suffered astonishingly of late; the influence which this will have upon our internal resources is much to be apprehended. It is to be wished that France would see the great advantages she would derive from keeping a superiority on this coast, where her fleets would be maintained cheaply, while they protected our commerce, and compelled England either to risk her army, or to keep a regular fleet here at five times their expense. Enclosed is a statement of our trade drawn up by Mr. Morris. You are requested to communicate this to the Court of Versailles, and to

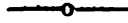


use every means in your power to bring the Court to concur in adopting it.

I also enclose a resolution of Congress, to request you to apply for the prisoners due to us, in order that they may be sent here and exchanged for our seamen, who are confined without the hope of relief. Is it impossible to devise some means for the enlargement of those who are confined in England? Can no cartel be settled? or no means devised for sending them here to be exchanged? Their case is really pitiable.

I have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, May 25th, 1782.

My dear Friend,

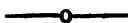
Yours of the 13th instant I received by Mr. Oswald. I did not doubt but that the news of a general and absolute release of the American prisoners, which Lord Shelburne was so good as to communicate to me, in answer to that part of your letter of the 5th of April, in which you speak so pathetically of *sweet reconciliation*, would give you much sincere and heartfelt pleasure. God send that it may be the happy omen of final *reconciliation* and *durable peace*! I should be very happy to hear that good news from you, and in any way to contribute to it. Having on that subject communicated the preliminaries, dated May, 1782, to Lord Shelburne, you may be assured that I have no reservations upon that head respecting America, in any circumstances or condition whatever. You know all my thoughts upon that subject, and the principles upon which they are founded, and therefore that they are not changeable.

It would give me the greatest pleasure if I could hope for any opportunity of seeing you. I could say many things which are otherwise incommunicable, and which, perhaps, would contribute to facilitate the road to peace. I think I see in many parts much matter to work with, out of which a peace, honorable to all parties, and upon durable principles, might be established. *No degrading or mortifying conditions to shorten peace and rekindle war.*

Perhaps I might not say too much if I were to add, that simply the adoption of *reason* among nations, and the mere rectification of obsolete and Gothic absurdities, which carry no gratification, would afford a fund of remuneration to all parties for renouncing those objects of mutual contention which, *in the eye of reason*, are no better than creatures of passion, jealousy, and false pride. Until the principles of *reason* and equity shall be adopted in national transactions, peace will not be durable amongst men.

These are reflections general to all nations. As to the mutual concerns between Great Britain and North America, *reconciliation* is the touchstone to prove those hearts, which are without alloy. If I can be of any assistance to you, in any communications or explanations conducive to peace, you may command my utmost services. Even if a French Minister were to overhear such an offer, let him not take it in jealous part. Zealously and affectionately attached to my own country and to America, I am nevertheless most perfectly of accord with you, that justice and honor should be observed towards all nations. Mr. Oswald will do me the favor to convey this to you. I heartily wish him success in his pacific embassy.

Yours ever most affectionately,                      DAVID HARTLEY.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, May 30th, 1783.

Dear Sir,

Since my last, of the 22d instant, I have been honored with yours of the 30th of March, together with the letter from Mr. Adams to you enclosed, and the papers, for which I am extremely obliged to you.

I am not at all disappointed at the manner in which the British Administration have declared their wish for peace, or at the reluctance they show in parting with this country. To a proud nation the loss of three million subjects is mortifying. Every journeyman weaver in every petty village in England conceived himself a sovereign, even while working for the slaves of his supposed subjects. It requires a degree of magnanimity, of which they are incapable, to surrender with dignity what they are no longer able to hold. But they must suppose the politics of the rest of the world to move upon

weaker principles than their own, if they imagine the offers they propose to hold out to the belligerent Powers will detach them from their alliance with each other, till all the objects of it are attained. Of what avail would the cessions they made in the West Indies be to France, if we were again connected with England. What security would she have for those cessions, or even for the rest of her islands? What she has offered to Spain I know not. To us she has offered nothing, as I have yet heard, but her friendship and the blessings of her government. A seven years' enmity has taught us to put very little value on the former, and the present happiness of the people of England and Ireland has enabled us to form a just estimate of the latter.

I have told you that we have nothing to apprehend here from the offers of Britain. I have had no reason since to change that opinion. The way, however, to put it out of doubt is to enable us to expel the enemy from this continent. The task is not difficult, and the object is sufficiently important not to let it depend upon other operations.

I am instructed to prepare a memorial to the Court of Versailles on the subject of the prize money due to Paul Jones and the officers and men that sailed under his command. Continual complaints are made on that subject. Surely M. de Chaumont has had sufficient time to settle this business. I must beg the favor of you to press it, and to draw and present a memorial to the Court, if it cannot otherwise be accomplished. Mr. Barclay will have orders to receive the money for them. I enclose an extract of a letter from Captain Jones on the subject, together with the list of the ships and their force, agreeable to which the division should be made.

I also send his account of the detention of the brigantine *Berkbosch*, together with a copy of De Nief's certificate, that the property belonged to British owners. This I think at first view is sufficient justification of his conduct, and I hope will be deemed satisfactory, especially when it is considered that our courts are open for a further prosecution of the inquiry, if any injury has been unjustly sustained. I shall take the earliest opportunity to inquire into the other cases you mention. If I am rightly informed, the insult to the Court of Norway is already avenged, the vessels, which are said to have committed it, having been lost at sea. This puts a stop to any further inquiry about it. I shall, however, endeavor to

get this fact more fully ascertained, and write to you again. I should be glad to know on what principle these applications are made to the Court of France. If the Powers, who suppose themselves injured, consider us as the subjects of Great Britain, they should carry their complaints to the Court of St. James's. If they consider us independent of them, they should address themselves to us or to you directly.

I am very happy to find you have not lost sight of the prizes detained by the Danish Court, and that you so happily availed yourself of the opportunity they afforded you, to renew your application. This object ought to be pushed, not so much on account of the value of the vessels, as to show that we know what is due to *ourselves*.

Enclosed is a resolution of Congress on the subject of accounts, which you will be pleased to take the earliest opportunity to carry into execution.

You draw an agreeable picture of the French Court, and their favorable dispositions. They stand very high in the esteem of this country; and though we sometimes entertain the hope of repaying by our commerce and alliance the friendship they have shown us, we are not on that account the less sensible of our obligation to them. The distrust and jealousies, which secret enemies have endeavored to excite, have died away. One successful exertion in our favor will secure to them forever the affections of this country. I take an interest in the happiness of the Marquis de la Fayette, which makes me learn with great pleasure the reception he has met with. No man is more worthy of the esteem he enjoys, both at home and here. I have forbore to write to him for some time, in expectation that he was on his way. The same reasons restrain me now. Should any extraordinary event have detained him, you will be so obliging as to mention this as my apology. I am charmed with your idea of a medal to perpetuate the memory of York and Saratoga. The thought is simple, elegant, and strikingly expressive of the subject. I cannot however but flatter myself, that before it can be executed, your Hercules will have tasked your invention for a new emblem.

I enclose a number of letters that have passed between Generals Washington, Clinton, Robinson, and Sir Guy, chiefly on the subject of Captain Huddy, who, having been taken prisoner and confined some time at New York, was carried by a Captain Lippincott and a

party of soldiers to the Jersey shore, and there hanged without the least pretence. You will see an account of the whole transaction in some of the papers I sent. The General, in pursuance of his determination, has ordered the lot to be cast among the British captains. It has fallen upon the honorable Captain Asgill of the Guards, who is now on his way to camp. A friend of his, Captain Ludlow, is gone to New York to see if any thing can be done to save him. It is really a melancholy case, but the repeated cruelties of this kind that have been practised, have rendered it absolutely necessary to execute the resolution to retaliate, which we have so often taken, and so frequently been prevented by our feelings from carrying into execution.

We are yet totally ignorant of the event of the battle fought on the 12th of April, in the West Indies, of which you will see various and contradictory accounts in our papers. You will have more certain information in Europe. Providence is taken by the Spaniards. Gillon commanded the fleet on the occasion. He yesterday came to this port with a number of the Havana vessels, for which we were in great pain.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

—○—  
RICHARD OSWALD TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, June 5th, 1782.

Sir,

While Mr. Lautens was under confinement in England, he promised that on condition of his being liberated upon his parole, he would apply to you for an exchange in favor of Lord Cornwallis, by a discharge of his Lordship, granted upon the surrender of his garrison at the village of York, in Virginia; and in case of your being under any difficulty in making such exchange, he undertook to write to the Congress, and request it of that assembly, making no doubt of obtaining a favorable answer, without loss of time.

This proposal, signed by Mr. Laurens's hand, I carried and delivered, I think in the month of December last, to his Majesty's then Secretaries of State, which was duly attended to; and in consequence thereof Mr. Laurens was soon after set at full liberty. And though not a prisoner under parole, yet it is to be hoped a

variation in the mode of discharge will not be supposed of any essential difference.

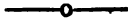
And with respect to Mr. Laurens, I am satisfied he will consider himself as much interested in the success of this application, as if his own discharge had been obtained under the form, as proposed by the representation which I delivered to the Secretaries of State, and I make no doubt will sincerely join my Lord Cornwallis in an acknowledgment of your favor and good offices, in granting his lordship a full discharge of his parole abovementioned.

I have the honor to be, with much respect, sir, your most obedient,  
humble servant,

RICHARD OSWALD.

P. S. Major Ross has got no copy of Lord Cornwallis's parole. He says it was in the common form, as in like cases.

Since writing the above, I recollect I was under a mistake, as if the proposal of exchange came first from Mr. Laurens; whereas, it was made by his Majesty's Secretaries of State to me, that Mr. Laurens should endeavor to procure the exchange of Lord Cornwallis, so as to be discharged himself. Which proposal I carried to Mr. Laurens, and had from him the obligation abovementioned, upon which the mode of his discharge was settled. R. O.



TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Passy, June 5th, 1782.

Sir,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me, respecting the parole of Lord Cornwallis. You are acquainted with what I wrote some time since to Mr. Laurens. To-morrow is post day from Holland, when possibly I may receive an answer, with a paper drawn up by him for the purpose of discharging that parole, to be signed by us jointly. I suppose the staying at Paris another day will not be very inconvenient to Major Ross; and if I do not hear to-morrow from Mr. Laurens, I will immediately, in compliance with your request, do what I can towards the liberation of Lord Cornwallis.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir, your most obedient,  
humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

The Hague, June 13th, 1782.

Sir,

I had yesterday, at Amsterdam, the honor of receiving your Excellency's letter of June the 2d.

The discovery that Mr. Grenville's power was only to treat with France does not surprise me at all. The British Ministry are too divided among themselves, and have too formidable an opposition against them, in the King and old Ministers, and are possessed of too little of the confidence of the nation, to have courage to make concessions of any sort, especially since the news of their successes in the East and West Indies. What their vanity will end in God only knows; for my own part, I cannot see a probability that they will ever make peace, until their finances are ruined, and such distresses brought upon them as will work up their parties into a civil war.

I wish their enemies could by any means be persuaded to carry on the war against them in places where they might be sure of triumphs, instead of insisting on pursuing it where they are sure of defeat. But we must take patience, and wait for time to do what wisdom might easily and soon do.

I have not, as yet, taken any engagements with the Dutch not to make peace without them; but I will take such engagements in a moment, if the Dutch will take them, and I believe they would very cheerfully. I shall not propose it, however, till I have the concurrence of the Duc de la Vauguyon, who will do nothing without the instructions of his Court. I would not delay it a moment from any expectation that the English will acknowledge our independence and make peace with us, because I have no such expectations. The permanent friendship of the Dutch may be easily obtained by the United States; that of England, never; it is gone with the days before the flood. If we ever enjoy the smallest degree of sincere friendship again from England, I am totally incapable of seeing the character of a nation or the connexion of things; which, however, may be the case, for what I know. They have brought themselves into such a situation! Spain, Holland, America, the armed neutrality, have all such pretensions and demands upon them, that where is the English Minister, or member

of Parliament, that dares vote for the concession to them? The pretensions of France I believe would be so moderate that possibly they might be acceded to. But it is much to be feared that Spain, who deserves the least, will demand the most; in short, the work of peace appears so impracticable and chimerical, that I am happy in being restrained to this country, by my duty, and by this means excused from troubling my head much about it.

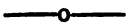
I have a letter from America that informed me that Mr. Jay had refused to act in the Commission for peace; but if he is on the way to Paris, as you suppose, I presume my information must be a mistake, which I am very glad of. Mr. Laurens did me the honor of a very short visit, in his way to France, but I was very sorry to learn from him, that in a letter to your Excellency from Ostend, he had declined serving in the Commission for peace. I had vast pleasure in his conversation, for I found him possessed of the most exact judgment concerning our enemies, and of the same noble sentiment in all things which I saw in him in Congress.

What is the system of Russia? Does she suppose that England has too many enemies upon her, and that their demands and pretensions are too high? Does she seek to embroil affairs, and to light up a general war in Europe? Is Denmark in concert with her, or any other Power? Her conduct is a phenomenon. Is there any secret negociation or intrigue on foot to form a party for England among the Powers of Europe, and to make a balance against the power of the enemies of England?

The States of Holland and several other provinces have taken a resolution against the mediation for a separate peace; and this nation seems to be well fixed in its system, and in the common cause.

My best respects and affections to my old friend, Mr. Jay, if you please. I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, June 23d, 1792.

Dear Sir,

This will be sent with duplicates of some of my former letters to



the southward, to embrace the first opportunity that shall offer from thence. By so uncertain a conveyance you can expect nothing. Nor, indeed, does our present situation furnish any thing that calls for your immediate attention, unless it be the unanimity with which the people of all ranks agree in determining to listen to no proposals from England which have not the alliance with France for their basis. Perhaps the joy they have discovered in celebrating the birth of the Dauphin, will be considered as a proof of their sincere attachment to the present illustrious monarch of France and his family.

Leslie has endeavored to bring General Greene to agree to a suspension of arms for the Southern Department, which he has very prudently refused.

Nothing has yet been determined, or rather executed, with respect to Captain Asgill. The enemy are holding a court-martial on Lippincott, the executioner of Captain Huddy; on their decision the life of Captain Asgill will depend. Such is the melancholy necessity which the cruelty of the enemy has imposed.

You enclosed a letter from the Count de Vergennes, on the subject of the pension due M. Tousard. Congress are too sensible of that gentleman's merit to deprive him of it. But as it is necessary that every thing of this kind be transacted at one office, it is proper that he direct some person as his agent to apply to the Treasury Office here, and produce your certificate of the time to which the last payment was made, or at least transmit a statement of his account, on which the balance will be paid, and his pension regularly settled with his attorney in future.

The case of the brigantine Ernten has been decided upon in the inferior courts, and in the Court of Appeals. The latter have been prevailed upon, at my request, to give a rehearing, which is not yet determined. Should its determination be against the vessel or cargo, on a conviction that she was British property, Congress will not choose to interfere in the execution of the sentence, which the court they have instituted is competent to award.

I could wish to know from you what allowance you make to your private secretary, and to have an accurate estimate of those contingent expenses of your office which you think ought to be charged as distinct from your salary.

I enclose a copy of a letter from Mr. Deane to Governor Trumbull,

with his answer, which you will please to forward. A copy of the answer is also enclosed.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, June 25th, 1789.

Sir,

I have received your respective letters of January 26th and February 13th. The first was accompanied with a form of a convention for the establishment of consuls. Mr. Barclay having been detained these six months in Holland, though in continual expectation of returning hither, I have yet done nothing in that business, thinking his presence might be of use in settling it. As soon as he arrives I shall move the completion of it.

The second enforces some resolutions of Congress, sent me with it, respecting a loan of 12,000,000 of livres, to be demanded of France for the current year. I had already received the promise of six millions, together with the clearest and most positive assurances, that it was all the King could spare to us, that we must not expect more, that if drafts and demands came upon me beyond that sum, it behooved me to take care how I accepted them, or where I should find funds for the payment, since I could certainly not be further assisted out of the royal treasury. Under this declaration, with what face could I ask for another six millions? It would be saying, you are not to be believed; you can spare more; you are able to lend me twice the sum if you were but willing. If you read my letter to Mr. Morris, of this date, I think you will be convinced how improper any language, capable of such a construction, would be to such a friend. I hope, however, that the loan Mr. Adams has opened in Holland for three millions of florins, which it is said is likely to succeed, will supply the deficiency.

By the newspapers I have sent, you will see that the general disposition of the British nation towards us had been changed. Two persons have been sent here by the new Ministers to propose treating for peace. They had at first some hopes of getting the belligerent Powers to treat separately, one after another, but finding that imprac-

licable, they have, after several messengers sent to and fro, come to a resolution of treating with all together for a general peace, and have agreed that the place shall be Paris. Mr. Grenville is now here with full powers for that purpose, (if they can be reckoned full with regard to America, till a certain act is completed for enabling his Majesty to treat, &c., which has gone through the Commons, and has been once read in the House of Lords.) I keep a very particular journal of what passes every day in the affair, which is transcribing to be sent to you. I shall, therefore, need to say no more about it in this letter, except, that though I still think they were sincere at first in their desire of peace, yet since their success in the West Indies, I imagine that I see marks of their desiring rather to draw the negotiations into length, that they may take the chance of what the campaign shall produce in their favor, and as there are so many interests to adjust, it will be prudent for us to suppose that even another campaign may pass before all can be agreed. Something, too, may happen to break off the negotiations, and we should be prepared for the worst. •

I hoped for the assistance of Mr. Adams and Mr. Laurens. The first is too much engaged in Holland to come hither, and the other declines serving; but I have now the satisfaction of being joined by Mr. Jay, who, happily, arrived here from Madrid last Sunday. The Marquis de la Fayette is of great use in our affairs here, and as the campaign is not likely to be very active in North America, I wish I may be able to prevail with him to stay a few weeks longer. By him you will receive the journal abovementioned, which is already pretty voluminous, and yet the negotiations cannot be said to be opened.

Ireland, you will see, has obtained all her demands triumphantly. I meet no one from that country who does not express some obligations to America for their success.

Before I received your just observations on the subject, I had obtained from the English Ministers a resolution to exchange all our prisoners. They thought themselves obliged to have an act of Parliament about it for authorizing the King to do it, this war being different from others, as made by an act of Parliament declaring us rebels, and our people being committed for high treason. I empowered Mr. Hodgson, who was chairman of the committee that collected and dispensed the charitable subscriptions for the American

prisoners, to treat and conclude on the terms of their discharge ; and having approved of the draft he sent me of the agreement, I hope Congress will see fit to order a punctual execution of it. I have long suffered with those poor, brave men, who, with so much public virtue, have endured four or five years' hard imprisonment, rather than serve against their country. I have done all I could afford towards making their situation more comfortable ; but their numbers were so great that I could do but little for each ; and that very great villain, Digges, defrauded them of between three and four hundred pounds, which he drew from me on their account. He lately wrote me a letter, in which he pretended he was coming to settle with me, and to convince me that I had been mistaken with regard to his conduct ; but he never appeared, and I hear he has gone to America. Beware of him, for he is very artful, and has cheated many. I hear every day of new rogueries committed by him in England.

The Ambassador from Sweden to this Court applied to me lately to know if I had powers that would authorise my making a treaty with his master in behalf of the United States. Recollecting a general power that was formerly given to me with the other Commissioners, I answered in the affirmative. He seemed much pleased, and said the King had directed him to ask the question ; and charged him to tell me that he had so great esteem for me, that it would be a particular satisfaction to him to have such a transaction with me. I have, perhaps, some vanity in repeating this ; but I think, too, that it is right that Congress should know it, and judge if any use may be made of the reputation of a citizen for the public service. In case it should be thought fit to employ me in that business, it will be well to send a more particular power, and proper instructions. The Ambassador added, that it was a pleasure to him to think—and he hoped it would be remembered—that Sweden was the first Power in Europe which had voluntarily offered its friendship to the United States without being solicited. This affair should be talked of as little as possible till completed.

I enclose another complaint from Denmark, which I request you will lay before Congress. I am continually pestered with complaints from French seamen, who were with Captain Cunningham in his first cruise from Dunkirk ; from others who were in the Lexington, the Alliance, &c., being put on board prizes that were retaken, were never afterwards able to join their respective ships, and so have

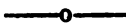
been deprived of the wages, &c., due to them. It is for our national honor that justice should be done them, if possible; and I wish you to procure an order of Congress for inquiring into their demands, and satisfying such as shall be found just. It may be addressed to the Consul.

I enclose a note from M. de Vergennes to me, accompanied by a memoir relating to a Swiss, who died at Edenton. If you can procure the information desired, it will much oblige the French Ambassador in Switzerland.

I have made the addition you directed to the cypher. I rather prefer the old one of Dumas, perhaps because I am more used to it. I enclose several letters from that ancient and worthy friend of our country. He is now employed as secretary to Mr. Adams; and I must, from a long experience of his zeal and usefulness, beg leave to recommend him warmly to the consideration of Congress, with regard to his appointments, which have never been equal to his merit. As Mr. Adams writes me the good news that he shall no longer be obliged to draw on me for his salary, I suppose it will be proper to direct his paying that which shall be allowed to M. Dumas.

Be pleased to present my duty to the Congress, and believe me to be, with great esteem and regard,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, June 29th, 1782.

Sir,

In mine of the 25th instant, I omitted mentioning that, at the repeated earnest instances of Mr. Laurens, who had given such expectations to the Ministry in England, when his parole or securities were discharged, as that he could not think himself at liberty to act in public affairs till the parole of Lord Cornwallis was absolved by me in exchange, I sent to that General the paper of which the enclosed is a copy;\* and I see by the English papers, that his lordship, immediately on the receipt of it, appeared at Court, and has taken his seat in the House of Peers, which he did not before think was warrantable. My

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\* See above, page 262.

authority for doing this appeared questionable to myself, but Mr. Laurens judged it deducible from that respecting General Burgoyne, and, by his letters to me, seemed so unhappy till it was done, that I ventured it, with a clause, however, as you will see, reserving to Congress the approbation or disallowance of it.

The enabling act is now said to be passed, but no copy of it is yet received here, so that, as the bill first printed has suffered alterations in passing through Parliament, and we know not what they are, the treaty with us is not yet commenced. Mr. Grenville expects his courier in a few days, with the answer of his Court to a paper given him on the part of this. That answer will probably afford us a clearer understanding of the intentions of the British Ministry, which for some weeks past have appeared somewhat equivocal and uncertain. It looks as if, since their late success in the West Indies, they a little repented of the advances they had made in their declarations respecting the acknowledgment of our independence; and we have pretty good information that some of the Ministers still flatter the King with the hope of recovering his sovereignty over us, on the same terms as are now making with Ireland. However willing we might have been in the commencement of this contest to have accepted such conditions, be assured we can have no safety in them at present. The King hates us most cordially. If he is once admitted to any degree of power and government among us, however limited, it will soon be extended by corruption, artifice, and force, till we are reduced to absolute subjection, and that the more easily, as, by receiving him again for our King, we shall draw upon us the contempt of all Europe, who now admire and respect us, and shall never again find a friend to assist us. There are, it is said, great divisions in the Ministry on other points as well as this, and those who aim at engrossing the power, flatter the King with this project of reunion, and, it is said, have much reliance on the operations of private agents sent into America to dispose minds there in favor of it, and to bring about a separate treaty there, with General Carleton. I have not the least apprehension that Congress will give in to this scheme, it being inconsistent with our treaties, as well as with our interest; but I think it will be well to watch the emissaries, and secure, or banish immediately, such as shall be found tampering and stirring up the people to call for it.

The firm united resolution of France, Spain, and Holland, joined

with ours, not to treat of a particular, but a general peace, notwithstanding the separate tempting offers to each, will, in the end, give us the command of that peace. Every one of the other Powers see clearly its interest in this, and persists in that resolution. The Congress, I am persuaded, are as clear-sighted as any of them, and will not depart from the system which has been attended with so much success, and promises to make America soon both great and happy.

I have just received a letter from Mr. Laurens, dated at Lyons, on his journey into the south of France for his health. Mr. Jay will write also by this opportunity.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

# JOURNAL

OF THE NEGOCIATION FOR PEACE WITH GREAT BRITAIN,

FROM MARCH 21<sup>ST</sup> TO JULY 1<sup>ST</sup>, 1762.

Passy, May 9th, 1762.

As since the change of the Ministry in England, some serious professions have been made of their disposition to peace, and of their readiness to enter into a general treaty for that purpose; and as the concerns and claims of five nations are to be discussed in that treaty, which must therefore be interesting to the present age, and to posterity, I am inclined to keep a journal of the proceedings as far as they come to my knowledge; and, to make it more complete, I will first endeavor to recollect what has already passed. Great affairs sometimes take their rise from small circumstances. My good friend and neighbor, Madame Brillon, being at Nice all last winter for her health, with her very amiable family, wrote to me that she had met with some English gentry there, whose acquaintance proved agreeable; among them she named Lord Cholmondely, who she said, had promised to call on his return to England, and drink tea with us at Passy. He left Nice sooner than she supposed, and came to Paris long before her. On the 21st of March, I received the following note:

“Lord Cholmondely’s compliments to Dr. Franklin; he sets out for London to-morrow evening, and should be glad to see him for five minutes before he went. Lord Cholmondely will call upon him at any time in the morning he shall please to appoint.

“*Thursday evening. Hotel de Chartres.*”

I wrote for answer, that I should be at home all the next morning, and glad to see his lordship, if he did me the honor of calling on me. He came accordingly. I had before no personal knowledge of this nobleman. We talked of our friends whom we left at Nice, then of



affairs in England, and the late resolutions of the Commons on Mr. Conway's motion. He told me that he knew Lord Shelburne had a great regard for me, that he was sure his lordship would be pleased to hear from me, and that if I would write a line, he should have a pleasure in carrying it. On which I wrote the following :

## TO LORD SHELburnE.

“ Passy, March 22d, 1782.

“ My Lord,

“ Lord Cholmondely having kindly offered to take a letter from me to your lordship, I embrace the opportunity of assuring the continuance of my ancient respect for your talents and virtues, and of congratulating you on the returning good disposition of your country in favor of America, which appears in the late resolutions of the Commons. I am persuaded it will have good effects. I hope it will tend to produce a *general peace*, which I am sure your lordship, with all good men, desires, which I wish to see before I die, and to which I shall, with infinite pleasure, contribute every thing in my power.

“ Your friends, the Abbé Morellet and Madame Helvetius, are well. You have made the latter very happy by your present of gooseberry bushes, which arrived in five days, and in excellent order.

“ With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

“ B. FRANKLIN.”

Soon after this we heard from England that a total change had taken place in the Ministry, and that Lord Shelburne had come in as Secretary of State. But I thought no more of my letter, till an old friend and near neighbor of mine many years in London appeared at Passy, and introduced a Mr. Oswald, whom he said had a great desire to see me, and Mr. Oswald, after some little conversation, gave me the following letters from Lord Shelburne and Mr. Laurens :

## LORD SHELburnE TO B. FRANKLIN.

“ London, April 6th, 1782.

“ Dear Sir,

“ I have been favored with your letter, and am much obliged by your remembrance. I find myself returned nearly to the same

situation, which you remember me to have occupied nineteen years ago, and I should be very glad to talk to you as I did then, and afterwards in 1767, upon the means of promoting the happiness of mankind, a subject much more agreeable to my nature than the best concerted plans for spreading misery and devastation. I have had a high opinion of the compass of your mind, and of your foresight. I have often been beholden to both, and shall be glad to be so again, as far as is compatible with your situation. Your letter discovering the same disposition, has made me send to you Mr. Oswald. I have had a longer acquaintance with him than even I have had the pleasure to have with you. I believe him an honest man, and, after consulting some of our common friends, I have thought him the fittest for the purpose. He is a pacifical man, and conversant in those negotiations which are most interesting to mankind. This has made me prefer him to any of our speculative friends, or to any person of higher rank. He is fully apprized of my mind, and you may give full credit to every thing he assures you of. At the same time, if any other channel occurs to you, I am ready to embrace it. I wish to retain the same simplicity and good faith which subsisted between us in transactions of less importance.

“I have the honor to be, &c.,

SHELBURNE.”

HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, April 7th, 1782.

“Dear Sir,

“Richard Oswald, Esquire, who will do me the honor of delivering this, is a gentleman of the strictest candor and integrity. I dare give such assurances from an experience little short of thirty years, and to add, you will be perfectly safe in conversing freely with him on the business he will introduce, a business which Mr. Oswald has disinterestedly engaged in, from motives of benevolence, and from the choice of the man a persuasion follows, that the Electors mean to be in earnest.

“Some people in this country, who have too long indulged themselves in abusing every thing American, have been pleased to circulate an opinion that Dr. Franklin is a very cunning man; in

answer to which, I have remarked to Mr. Oswald, ‘ Dr. Franklin knows very well how to manage a cunning man, but when the Doctor converses, or treats with a man of candor, there is no man more candid than himself.’ I do not know whether you will ultimately agree on political sketches, but I am sure, as gentlemen, you will part very well pleased with each other. Should you, sir, think proper to communicate to me your sentiments and advice on our affairs, the more amply the more acceptable, and probably the more serviceable ; Mr. Oswald will take charge of your despatches, and afford a secure means of conveyance.

“To this gentleman I refer you for general information of a journey, which I am immediately to make, partly in his company, at Ostend, to file off for the Hague. I feel a willingness, infirm as I am, to attempt doing as much good as can be expected from such a prisoner upon parole. As General Burgoyne is certainly exchanged, (a circumstance, by-the-by, which possibly might have embarrassed us, had your late propositions been accepted,) may I presume at my return to offer another Lieutenant General, now in England, a prisoner upon parole, in exchange ? or what shall I offer in exchange for myself, a thing in my own estimation of no great value ?

“I have the honor to be, with great respect, and, permit me to add, great reverence, sir, &c.,

“HENRY LAURENS.”

I entered into conversation with Mr. Oswald. He was represented in the letter as fully apprized of Lord Shelburne’s mind, and I was desirous of knowing it. All I could learn was, that the new Ministry sincerely wished for a peace, that they considered the object of the war, to France and America, as obtained. That if the independence of the United States was agreed to, there was no other point in dispute, and therefore nothing to hinder a pacification. That they were ready to treat of *Peace*, but he intimated, that if France should insist upon terms too humiliating to England, they could still continue the war, having yet great strength, and many resources left. I let him know that America would not treat but in concert with France, and that my colleagues not being here I could do nothing of importance in the affair ; but that, if he pleased, I would present him to M. de Vergennes, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He consenting, I wrote and sent the following letter :

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

"Passy, April 15th, 1782.

"Sir,

"An English nobleman, Lord Cholmondely, lately returning from Italy, called upon me here at the time when we received the news of the first resolution of the House of Commons relating to America. In conversation he said that he knew his friend, Lord Shelburne, had a great regard for me, that it would be pleasing to him to hear of my welfare, and receive a line from me, of which he, Lord Cholmondely, should like to be the bearer, adding, if there should be a change of Ministry, he believed Lord Shelburne would be employed. I thereupon wrote a few lines, of which I enclose a copy. This day I received an answer, which I also enclose, together with another letter from Mr. Laurens. They both, as your Excellency will see, recommend the bearer, Mr. Oswald, as a very honest, sensible man. I have had a little conversation with him. He tells me that there has been a desire of making a separate peace with America, and continuing the war with France and Spain, but that now all wise people give up that idea as impracticable; and it is his private opinion that the Ministry do sincerely desire a *general peace*, and that they will readily come into it, provided France does not insist upon conditions too humiliating for England, in which case she will make great and violent efforts, rather than submit to them, and that much is still in her power, &c.

"I told the gentleman that I could not enter into particulars with him, but in concert with the Ministers of this Court. And I proposed introducing him to your Excellency, after communicating to you the letters he had brought me, in case you should think fit to see him, with which he appeared to be pleased. I intend waiting on you to-morrow, when you will please to favor me with your intentions, and favor me with your counsels. He had heard nothing of Forth's mission, and the old Ministry had not acquainted the new with that transaction. Mr. Laurens came over with him in the same vessel, and went from Ostend to Holland.

"With great respect, I am, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN."

The next day, being at Court with the foreign Ministers, as usual on Tuesdays, I saw M. de Vergennes, who acquainted me that he

had caused the letters to be translated, had considered the contents, and should like to see Mr. Oswald. We agreed that the interview should be on Wednesday, at 10 o'clock. Immediately on my return home, I wrote to Mr. Oswald, acquainting him with what had passed at Versailles, and proposing that he should be with me at half past eight the next morning, in order to proceed thither. I received from him the following answer :

“ Paris, April 16th.

“ Sir,

“ I have the honor of yours by the bearer, and shall be sure to wait on you to-morrow, at half past eight, and am, with much respect, &c.,

“ RICHARD OSWALD.”

He came accordingly, and we arrived at Versailles punctually. M. de Vergennes received him with much civility. Mr. Oswald not being ready in speaking French, M. de Rayneval interpreted. Mr. Oswald at first thought of sending an express, with the account of the conversation, which continued near an hour, and was offered a passport, but finally concluded to go himself; and I wrote the next day the letter following :

TO LORD SHELBURNE.

“ Passy, April 18th, 1782.

“ My Lord,

“ I have received the letter your lordship did me the honor of writing to me on the 6th instant. I congratulate you on your new appointment to the honorable and important office you formerly filled so worthily, which must be so far pleasing to you, as it affords you more opportunities of doing good, and of serving your country essentially in its great concerns.

“ I have conversed a good deal with Mr. Oswald, and am much pleased with him. He appears to me a wise and honest man. I acquainted him that I was commissioned, with others, to treat of and conclude a peace. That full powers were given us for that purpose, and that the Congress promised, in good faith, to ratify, confirm, and cause to be faithfully observed, the treaty we should make; but that we would not treat separately from France, and I proposed introducing him to the Count de Vergennes, to whom

I communicated your lordship's letter, containing Mr. Oswald's character, as a foundation for the interviews. He will acquaint you that the assurance he gave of his Britannic Majesty's good dispositions towards peace was well received, and assurances returned of the same good dispositions in his Most Christian Majesty.

“With regard to circumstances relative to a treaty, M. de Vergennes observed, that the King's engagements were such that he could not treat without the concurrence of his allies; that the treaty should, therefore, be for a general, not a partial peace; that if the parties were disposed to finish the war speedily by themselves, it would perhaps be best to treat at Paris, as an Ambassador from Spain was already there, and the Commissioners from America might easily and soon be assembled there. Or, if they chose to make use of the proposed mediation, they might treat at Vienna; but that the King was so truly willing to put a speedy end to the war, that he would agree to any place the King of England should think proper.

“I leave the rest of the conversation to be related to your lordship by Mr. Oswald; and that he might do it more easily and fully than he could by letter, I was of opinion with him, that it would be best he should return immediately, and do it *viva voce*. Being myself but one of the four persons now in Europe commissioned by the Congress to treat of peace, I can make no propositions of much importance without them. I can only express my wish, that if Mr. Oswald returns hither, he may bring with him the agreement of your Court to treat for a general peace, and the proposal of place and time, that I may immediately write to Messrs. Adams, Laurens, and Jay. I suppose that, in this case, your lordship will think it proper to have Mr. Laurens discharged from the engagements he entered into when he was admitted to bail. I desire no other channel of communication between us than that of Mr. Oswald, which I think your lordship has chosen with much judgment. He will be witness of my acting with all the simplicity and good faith which you do me the honor to expect from me; and if he is enabled, when he returns hither, to communicate more fully your lordship's mind on the principal points to be settled, I think it may contribute much to the blessed work our hearts are engaged in.

“By the act of Parliament relative to the American prisoners, I see the King is empowered to exchange them. I hope those you

have in England and Ireland may be sent home soon to their country, in flags of truce, and exchanged for an equal number of your people. Permit me to add, that I think it would be well if some kindness were mixed in the transaction, with regard to their comfortable accommodation on shipboard, as these poor unfortunate people have been long absent from their families and friends, and rather hardly treated.

“With great and sincere respect, I have the honor to be, my lord, &c.,

“B. FRANKLIN.”

To the account contained in this letter, of what passed in the conversation with the Minister, I should add his frank declaration that, as the foundation of a good and durable peace should be laid in justice, whenever a treaty was entered upon, he had several demands of justice to make from England. Of this, says he, I give you previous notice. What these demands were he did not particularly say. One occurred to me, viz: reparation for the injury done in taking a number of French ships by surprise, before the declaration of the preceding war, contrary to the law of nations. Mr. Oswald seemed to wish to obtain some propositions to carry back with him, but M. de Vergennes said to him very properly, “There are four nations engaged in the war against you, who cannot, till they have consulted and know each other’s minds, be ready to make propositions. Your Court being without allies and alone, knowing its own mind, can express it immediately. It is, therefore, more natural to expect the first proposition from you.”

On our return from Versailles, Mr. Oswald took occasion to impress me with ideas that the present weakness of the Government of England, with regard to continuing the war, was owing chiefly to the division of sentiments about it. That in case France should make demands too humiliating for England to submit to, the spirit of the nation would be roused, unanimity would prevail, and resources would not be wanting. He said there was no want of money in the nation; that the chief difficulty lay in the finding out new taxes to raise it; and, perhaps, that difficulty might be avoided by shutting up the Exchequer, stopping the payment of the interests of the public funds, and applying that money to the support of the war. I made no reply to this; for I did not desire to discourage their stopping payment, which I considered as cutting the throat of

the public credit, and a means of adding fresh exasperation against them with the neighboring nations. Such menaces were, besides, an encouragement with me, remembering the adage—that *they who threaten are afraid*.

The next morning, when I had written the above letter to Lord Shelburne, I went with it to Mr. Oswald's lodgings, and gave it to him to read before I sealed it, that in case any thing might be in it with which he was not satisfied, it might be corrected; but he expressed himself much pleased.

In going to him, I had also in view the entering into a conversation which might draw out something of the mind of his Court on the subject of Canada and Nova Scotia. I had thrown some loose thoughts on paper, which I intended to serve as memorandums for my discourse, but, without a fixed intention of showing them to him. On his saying that he was obliged to me for the good opinion I had expressed of him to Lord Shelburne, in my letter, and assuring me that he had entertained the same of me, I observed that I perceived Lord S. had placed great confidence in him, and as we had happily the same in each other, we might possibly, by a free communication of sentiments, and a previous settling of our own minds on some of the important points, be the means of great good, by impressing our sentiments on the minds of those with whom they might have influence, and where their being received might be of importance. I then remarked that his nation seemed to desire a reconciliation; that to obtain this, the party which had been the aggressor and had cruelly treated the other, should show some marks of concern for what was past, and some disposition to make reparation; that perhaps there were things, which America might demand by way of reparation, and which England might yield, and that the effect would be vastly greater if they appeared to be voluntary, and to spring from returning good will; that I, therefore, wished England would think of offering something to relieve those who had suffered by its scalping and burning parties. Lives, indeed, could not be restored nor compensated, but the villages and houses wantonly destroyed might be rebuilt, &c. I then touched upon the affair of Canada, and as, in a former conversation, he had mentioned his opinion that the giving up of that country to the English, at the last peace, had been a politic act in France, for that it had weakened the ties between England and her Colonies, and that he himself had



predicted from it the late revolution, I spoke of the occasions of future quarrel that might be produced by her continuing to hold it, hinting, at the same time, but not expressing too plainly, that such a situation, to us so dangerous, would necessarily oblige us to cultivate and strengthen our union with France. He appeared much struck with my discourse, and, as I frequently looked at my paper, he desired to see it. After some little delay, I allowed him to read it; the following is an exact copy :

## NOTES FOR CONVERSATION.

“To make a peace durable, what may give occasion for future wars should, if practicable, be removed.

“The territory of the United States and that of Canada, by long extended frontiers, touch each other.

“The settlers on the frontiers of the American provinces are generally the most disorderly of the people, who, being far removed from the eye and control of their respective governments, are more bold in committing offences against neighbors, and are forever occasioning complaints and furnishing matter for fresh differences between their States.

“By the late debates in Parliament and public writings, it appears that Britain desires a *reconciliation* with the Americans. It is a sweet word. It means much more than a mere peace, and what is heartily to be wished for. Nations make a peace whenever they are both weary of making war. But if one of them has made war upon the other unjustly, and has wantonly and unnecessarily done it great injuries, and refuses reparation, there may, for the present, be peace, the resentment of those injuries will remain, and will break out again in vengeance when occasions offer. These occasions will be watched for by one side, feared by the other, and peace will never be secure; nor can any cordiality subsist between them.

“Many houses and villages have been burnt in America by the English and their allies, the Indians. I do not know that the Americans will insist on reparation; perhaps they may. But would it not be better for England to offer it? Nothing would have a greater tendency to conciliate, and much of the future commerce and returning intercourse between the two countries may depend on the reconciliation. Would not the advantage of reconciliation by such means be greater than the expense?

“If, then, a way can be proposed which may tend to efface the memory of injuries, at the same time that it takes away the occasions of fresh quarrels and mischief, will it not be worth considering, especially if it can be done, not only without expense, but be a means of saving ?

“Britain possesses Canada. Her chief advantage from that possession consists in the trade for peltry. Her expenses in governing and defending that settlement must be considerable. It might be humiliating to her to give it up on the demand of America. Perhaps America will not demand it ; some of her political rulers may consider the fear of such a neighbor as a means of keeping the thirteen States more united among themselves, and more attentive to military discipline. But on the mind of the people in general, would it not have an excellent effect, if Britain should voluntarily offer to give up this province ; though on these conditions that she shall, in all times coming, have and enjoy the right of free trade thither, unincumbered with any duties whatsoever ; that so much of the vacant lands there shall be sold as will raise a sum sufficient to pay for the houses burnt by the British troops and their Indians ; and also to indemnify the Royalists for the confiscation of their estates ?

“This is mere conversation matter between Mr. Oswald and Mr. Franklin, as the former is not empowered to make propositions, and the latter cannot make any without the concurrence of his colleagues ?”

He then told me, that nothing in his judgment could be clearer, more satisfactory and convincing, than the reasonings in that paper ; that he would do his utmost to impress Lord Shelburne with them ; that, as his memory might not do them justice, and it would be impossible for him to express them so well, or state them so clearly as I had written them, he begged I would let him take the paper with him, assuring me that he would return it safely into my hands. I at length complied with this request also. We parted exceedingly good friends, and he set out for London.

By the first opportunity after his departure, I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams, and sent the papers therein mentioned, that he might fully be apprized of the proceedings. I omitted only the paper of *Notes for Conversation* with Mr. Oswald, but gave the substance, as appears in the letter. The reason of my omitting it

was, that, on reflection, I was not pleased with my having hinted a reparation to Tories for their forfeited estates, and I was a little ashamed of my weakness in permitting the paper to go out of my hands.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

“ Passy, April 20th, 1782.

“ Sir,

“ I hope your Excellency received the copy of our instructions, which I sent by the courier, from Versailles, some weeks since. I wrote to you on the 13th, to go by Captain Smedley, and sent a packet of correspondence with Mr. Hartley. Smedley did not leave Paris so soon as I expected; but you should have it by this time.

“ With this I send a fresh correspondence, which I have been drawn into, viz: 1st, A letter I sent to Lord Shelburne before he was a Minister. 2dly, His answer since he was a Minister, by Mr. Oswald. 3dly, A letter from Mr. Laurens. 4thly, My letter to M. de Vergennes. 5thly, My answer to Lord Shelburne. 6thly, My answer to Mr. Laurens. 7thly, Copy of Digges’s report. These papers will inform you pretty well of what passed between me and Mr. Oswald, except that in a conversation at parting, I mentioned to him that I observed they spoke much in England of obtaining a *reconciliation* with the Colonies; that this was more than a peace; that the latter might possibly be obtained without the former; that the cruel injuries constantly done us by burning our towns, &c., had made deep impressions of resentment that would long remain; that much of the advantage to the commerce of England from a peace would depend on a *reconciliation*; that the peace without reconciliation would probably not be durable; that, after a quarrel between friends, nothing tended so much to *conciliate*, as offers made by the aggressor of reparation for injuries done by him in his passion. And I hinted, that if England should make us a voluntary offer of Canada, expressly for that purpose, it might have a good effect.

“ Mr. Oswald liked much the idea, and said they were too much straitened for money to make us pecuniary reparation, but he should endeavor to persuade their doing it this way. He is furnished with a passport to go and return by Calais, and I expect him back in ten or twelve days. I wish you and Mr. Laurens could be here when he arrives, for I shall much want your advice, and cannot act without

your concurrence. If the present crisis of your affairs prevents your coming, I hope, at least, Mr. Laurens will be here, and we must communicate with you by expresses, for your letters to me by post are generally opened. I shall write by the next post, requesting Mr. Jay to be here also as soon as possible.

“ I received your letter advising of your draft on me for a quarter’s salary, which will be duly honored.

“ With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

“ B. FRANKLIN.”

Supposing Mr. Laurens to be in Holland with Mr. Adams, I, at the same time, wrote to him the following letter :

TO HENRY LAURENS.

“ Passy, April 20th, 1782.

“ Sir,

“ I received, by Mr. Oswald, the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 7th instant. He brought me also a letter from Lord Shelburne, which gave him the same good character that you do, adding, ‘ He is fully apprized of my mind, and you may give full credit to every thing he assures you of.’ Mr. Oswald, however, could give me no other particulars of his lordship’s mind but that he was sincerely disposed to peace. As the message seemed, therefore, rather intended to procure or receive propositions than to make any, I told Mr. Oswald that I could make none but in concurrence with my colleagues in the Commission; and that if we were together, we should not treat but in conjunction with France; and I proposed introducing him to M. de Vergennes, which he accepted.

“ He made to that Minister the same declaration of the disposition of England to peace, who replied, that France had assuredly the same good disposition; that a treaty might be immediately begun, but it must be for a *general*, not a *particular* peace; that, as to the place, he thought Paris might be the most convenient, as Spain had here already an Ambassador, and the American Commissioners could easily be assembled here—this upon a supposition of the parties treating directly with each other, without the intervention of mediators; but if the mediation was to be used, it might be at Vienna. The King, his master, however, was so truly disposed to

peace, that he would agree to any place that the King of England should choose; and would, at the treaty, give proof of the confidence that might be placed in any engagements he should then enter into by the fidelity and exactitude with which he should observe those he already had with his present allies.

“Mr. Oswald is returned with these general answers by the way of Calais, and expects to be here again in a few days. I wish it might be convenient for you and Mr. Adams to be here at the same time; but if the present critical situation of affairs there makes his being in Holland necessary just now, I hope you may, nevertheless, be here, bringing with you his opinion and advice. I have proposed to Lord Shelburne to discharge you from the obligations you entered into at the time of your enlargement, that you may act more freely in the treaty he desires.

“I had done myself the honor of writing to you a few days before the arrival of Mr. Oswald. My letter went by Mr. Young, your secretary, and enclosed a copy of your commission, with an offer of money, if you had occasion for any. Hoping that you will not return to England before you have been at Paris, I forbear enlarging on the state of our affairs here and in Spain. M. de Vergennes told me he should be very glad to see you here. I found Mr. Oswald to answer perfectly the character you gave me of him, and was much pleased with him.

“I have the honor to be, &c., &c., B. FRANKLIN.”

Just after I had despatched these letters, I received the following from Mr. Adams:

JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

“Amsterdam, April 16th, 1782.

“Sir,

“Yesterday noon, Mr. William Vaughan, of London, came to my house with Mr. Laurens, the son of the President, and brought me a line from the latter, and told me the President was at Haerlem, and desired to see me. I went to Haerlem, and found my old friend at the Golden Lion. He told me he was come partly for his health and the pleasure of seeing me; and partly to converse with me, and see if he had, at present, just ideas and views of things—at least to see if we agreed in sentiment, having been desired by several of the

new Ministry to do so. I asked him if he was at liberty? He said no, that he was still under parole, but at liberty to say what he pleased to me. I told him that I could not communicate to him, being a prisoner, even his own instructions, nor enter into any consultation with him as one of our colleagues in the Commission for peace; that all I should say to him would be as one private citizen conversing with another; but that, upon all such occasions, I should reserve a right to communicate whatever should pass to our colleagues and allies.

“He said that Lord Shelburne, and others of the new Ministers, were anxious to know whether there was any authority to treat of a separate peace, and whether there could be an accommodation upon any terms short of independence; that he had ever answered them that nothing short of an express or tacit acknowledgment of our independence, in his opinion, would ever be accepted, and that no treaty ever would, or could be, made separate from France. He asked me if his answers had been right? I told him that I was fully of that opinion. He said that the new Ministers had received Digges’s report; but his character was such that they did not choose to depend upon it; that a person by the name of Oswald, I think, set off for Paris to see you, about the same time he came away to see me.

“I desired him, between him and me, to consider, without saying any thing of it to the Ministry, whether we could ever have a real peace, with Canada or Nova Scotia in the hands of the English? And whether we ought not to insist, at least, upon a stipulation, that they should keep no standing army, or regular troops, nor erect any fortifications upon the frontiers of either? That, at present, I saw no motive that we had to be anxious for a peace, and if the nation was not ripe for it upon proper terms, we might wait patiently till they should be so.

“I found the old gentleman perfectly sound in his system of politics. He has a very poor opinion both of the integrity and abilities of the new Ministry, as well as the old. He thinks they know not what they are about; that they are spoiled by the same insincerity, duplicity, falsehood, and corruption, with the former. Lord Shelburne still flatters the King with ideas of conciliation and a separate peace, &c., yet the nation, and the best men in it, are for universal peace and an express acknowledgment of American

independence, and many of the best are for giving up Canada and Nova Scotia. His design seemed to be solely to know how far Digges's report was true. After an hour or two of conversation, I returned to Amsterdam, and left him to return to London.

“ These are all but artifices to raise the stocks ; and if you think of any method to put a stop to them, I will cheerfully concur with you. They now know sufficiently that our Commission is to treat of a general peace, and with persons vested with equal powers ; and if you agree to it, I will, never to see another messenger that is not a Plenipotentiary.

“ It is expected that the seventh Province, Guelderland, will this day acknowledge American independence. I think we are in such a situation now, that we ought not, upon any consideration, to think of a truce, or any thing short of an express acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the United States. I should be glad, however, to know your sentiments upon this point.

“ I have the honor to be, &c., JOHN ADAMS.”

To the above I immediately wrote the following answer :

TO JOHN ADAMS.

“ Passy, April 21st, 1782.

“ Sir,

“ I have just received the honor of yours, dated the 16th instant, acquainting me with the interview between your Excellency and Mr. Laurens. I am glad to learn that his political sentiments coincide with ours, and that there is a disposition in England to give us up Canada and Nova Scotia.

“ I like your idea of seeing no more messengers that are not Plenipotentiaries ; but I cannot refuse seeing again Mr. Oswald, as the Minister here considered the letter to me from Lord Shelburne as a kind of authentication given that messenger, and expects his return with some explicit propositions. I shall keep you advised of whatever passes.

“ The late act of Parliament, for exchanging American prisoners as *prisoners of war*, according to the law of nations, *any thing in their commitments notwithstanding*, seems to me a renunciation of their pretensions to try our people as subjects guilty of high treason, and to be a kind of tacit acknowledgment of our independence.

Having taken this step, it will be less difficult for them to acknowledge it expressly. They are now preparing transports to send the prisoners home. I yesterday sent the passports desired of me.

“Sir George Grand shows me a letter from Mr. Fizeaux, in which he says, that if advantage is taken of the present enthusiasm in favor of America, a loan might be obtained in Holland, of five or six millions of florins, for America, and if their house is empowered to open it he has no doubt of success; but that no time is to be lost. I earnestly recommend this matter to you as extremely necessary to the operations of our financier, Mr. Morris, who, not knowing that the greatest part of the last five millions had been consumed by purchase of goods, &c., in Europe, writes me advice of large drafts that he shall be obliged to make upon me this summer.

“This Court has granted us six millions of livres for the current year; but it will fall vastly short of our occasions, there being large orders to fulfil, and near two millions and a half to pay M. Beaumarchais, besides the interest, bills, &c. The House of Fizeaux and Grand is now appointed banker for France, by a special commission from the King, and will on that, as well as other, accounts be, in my opinion, the fittest for this operation. Your Excellency being on the spot can better judge of the terms, &c., and manage with that house the whole business, in which I should be glad to have no other concern than that of receiving assistance from it when pressed by the dreaded drafts.

“With great respect, I am, sir, &c., B. FRANKLIN.”

In reply to this, Mr. Adams wrote to me as follows:

JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

“Amsterdam, May 2d, 1782.

“Sir,

“I am honored with your favor of the 20th of April, and Mr. Laurens’s son proposes to carry the letter to his father forthwith. The instructions by the courier from Versailles came safe, as all other despatches by that channel no doubt will do. The correspondence with Mr. Hartley I received by Captain Smedley, and will take the first good opportunity by a private hand to return it, as well as that with the Earl of Shelburne.

“Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay will, I hope, be able to meet at  
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Paris; but when it will be in my power to go I know not. Your present negotiation about peace falls in very well to aid a proposition which I am instructed to make, as soon as the Court of Versailles shall judge proper, of a triple or quadruple alliance. This matter—the treaty of commerce—which is now under deliberation, and the loan, will render it improper for me to quit this station, unless in case of necessity. If there is a real disposition to permit Canada to accede to the American association, I should think there would be no great difficulty in adjusting all things between England and America, provided our allies are contented too. In a former letter I hinted that I thought an express acknowledgment of our independence might now be insisted on, but I did not mean that we should insist upon such an article in the treaty. If they make a treaty of peace with the United States of America, this is acknowledgment enough for me.

“The affair of a loan gives me much anxiety and fatigue. It is true I may open a loan for five millions; but I confess I have no hopes of obtaining so much: the money is not to be had. Cash is not infinite in this country. Their profits by trade have been ruined for two or three years; and there are loans open for France, Spain, England, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and several other Powers, as well as their own national, provincial, and collegiate loans. The undertakers are already loaded with burthens greater than they can bear; and all the brokers in the republic are so engaged, that there is scarcely a dueat to be lent but what is promised.

“This is the true cause why we should not succeed, yet they will seek an hundred other pretences. It is considered such an honor, and such an introduction to American trade, to be the house, that the eagerness to obtain the title of American banker is prodigious. Various houses have pretensions, which they set up very high; and let me choose which I will, I am sure of a cry and a clamor. I have taken some measures to endeavor to calm the heat, and give a general satisfaction, but have, as yet, small hopes of success. I would strike with any house that would insure the money; but none will undertake it now it is offered, although several were very ready to affirm that they could when it began to be talked of. Upon inquiry they do not find the money easy to obtain, which I could have told them before. It is to me, personally, perfectly indifferent which is the house; and the only question is, which will be able

to do best for the interest of the United States. This question, however simple, is not easy to answer; but I think it clear, after very painful and laborious inquiry for a year and a half, that no house whatever will be able to do much. Enthusiasm at some times, and in some countries, may do a great deal; but there has, as yet, been no enthusiasm in this country for America strong enough to untie many purses. Another year, if the war continues, perhaps we may do better.

“I have the honor to be, &c., JOHN ADAMS.”

During Mr. Oswald's absence I received the following from Mr. Laurens:

HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN.

“London, April 20th, 1782.

“Sir,

“I wrote to you on the 7th instant, by Mr. Oswald, since which, that is to say, on the 28th, I was honored by the receipt of your letter of the 12th, enclosing a copy of the commission for treating for peace, by the hands of Mr. Young. The recognizance exacted from me by the late Ministry has been vacated and done away by the present; these have been pleased to enlarge me without formal conditions; but, as I would not consent that the United States of America should be outdone in generosity, however late the marks appeared on this side, I took upon me to assure Lord Shelburne, in a letter of acknowledgment for the part which his lordship had taken for obtaining my release, that Congress would not fail to make a just and adequate return. The only return in my view is Lieutenant General Lord Cornwallis. Congress were pleased some time ago to offer a British Lieutenant General for my ransom; and as I am informed a special exchange of Lord Cornwallis for the same subject was lately in contemplation, it would afford me very great satisfaction to know that you will join me in cancelling the debt of honor which we have impliedly incurred, by discharging his lordship from the obligations of his parole.

“For my own part, though not a bold adventurer, I think I shall not commit myself to the risk of censure, by acting conjunctly with you in such a bargain. I entreat you, sir, at least to reflect on this matter. I shall take the liberty of requesting your determination when I reach the continent, which will probably happen in a few days.

“ Lord Cornwallis, in a late conversation with me, put the following case. ‘ Suppose,’ said his lordship, ‘ it shall have been agreed, in America, that Lord Cornwallis should be offered in exchange for Mr. Laurens, don’t you think, although you are now discharged, I ought to reap the intended benefit?’ A reply from the feelings of the heart, as I love fair play, was prompt: ‘ Undoubtedly, my lord, you ought to be, and shall be, in such case, discharged, and I will venture to take the burthen upon myself.’ Certain legal forms, I apprehend, rendered the discharge of me, without condition, unavoidable; but I had previously refused to accept of myself for nothing, and what I now aim at was understood as an adequate return; it is not to be doubted his lordship’s question was built on this ground.

“ I had uniformly and explicitly declared to the people here, people in the first rank of importance, that nothing short of independence in terms of our treaty of alliance, would induce America to treat for truce or peace, and that no treaty could be had without the consent of our ally first obtained; in a word, if you mean to have peace, you must seek for a general peace. The doctrine was ill relished, especially by those whose power only could set the machine in motion; but having, since my return from Haerlem, asserted in very positive terms, that I was confirmed in my former opinions, the late obduracy has been more than a little softened, as you will soon learn from the worthy friend by whom I addressed you on the 7th, who two days ago set out on his return to Passy and Versailles, with, I believe, a more permanent commission than the former.

“ Accept my thanks, sir, for the kind offer of a supply of money. I know too well how much you have been harassed for that article, and too well how low our American finances in Europe are; therefore, if I can possibly avoid it, I will not further trouble you, nor impoverish them, or not till the last extremity. Hitherto I have supported myself without borrowing from any body, and I am determined to continue living upon my own stock while it lasts; the stock is indeed small; my expenses have been and shall be in a suitable, modest style. I pray God to bless you.

“ I have the honor to be, &c., HENRY LAURENS.”

“ P. S. I judged it proper not only to show the peace commission to Lord Shelburne, but to give his lordship a copy of it, from an opinion that it would work no evil, being shown elsewhere.”

On the 4th of May Mr. Oswald returned, and brought me the following letter from Lord Shelburne :

LORD SHELburnE TO B. FRANKLIN.

“ Shelburne House, April 20th, 1782.

“ Dear Sir,

“ I have received much satisfaction in being assured by you that the qualifications of wisdom and integrity, which induced me to make choice of Mr. Oswald, as the fittest instrument for the renewal of our friendly intercourse, have also recommended him so effectually to your approbation and esteem. I most heartily wish the influence of this first communication of our mutual sentiments may be extended to a happy conclusion of all our public differences.

“ The candor with which the Count de Vergennes expresses his Most Christian Majesty's sentiments and wishes on the subject of a speedy pacification, is a pleasing omen of its accomplishment. His Majesty is not less decided in the same sentiments and wishes, and it confirms his Majesty's Ministers in their intention to act in like manner, as most consonant to the true dignity of a great nation. In consequence of these reciprocal advances, Mr. Oswald is sent back to Paris for the purpose of arranging and settling with you the preliminaries of time and place. And I have the pleasure to tell you that Mr. Laurens is already discharged from those engagements which he entered into when he was admitted to bail.

“ It is also determined that Mr. Fox, for whose department that communication is necessarily to proceed, shall send a proper person, who may confer and settle immediately with the Count de Vergennes the further measures and proceedings, which may be judged proper to adopt toward advancing the prosecution of this important business.

“ In the mean time, Mr. Oswald is instructed to communicate to you my thoughts upon the principal objects to be settled. Transports are actually preparing for the purpose of conveying your prisoners to America, to be there exchanged, and we trust that you will learn that due attention has not been wanting to their accommodation and good treatment.

“ I have the honor to be, with very sincere respect, dear sir, your very faithful and obedient humble servant,

“ SHELburnE.”

Having read the letter, I mentioned to Mr. Oswald the part which refers me to him for his lordship's sentiments. He acquainted me that they were very sincerely disposed to peace; that the whole Ministry concurred in the same disposition; that a good deal of confidence was placed in my character for open, honest dealing; that it was also generally believed I had still remaining some part of my ancient affection and regard for Old England, and it was hoped it might appear on this occasion. He then showed me an extract from the Ministers of Council, but did not leave the paper with me. As well as I can remember, it was to this purpose:

At a Cabinet Council, held April 27th, 1782, present Lord Rockingham, Lord Chancellor, Lord President, Lord Camden, &c., &c., to the number of fifteen or twenty, being all Ministers, and great officers of State,

“It was proposed to represent to his Majesty that it would be well for Mr. Oswald to return to Doctor Franklin and acquaint him that it is agreed to treat for a general peace, and at Paris; and that the principal points in contemplation are, the allowing of American independence on condition that England be put into the same situation that she was left in by the peace of 1763.”

Mr. Oswald also informed me that he had conversed with Lord Shelburne on the subject of my paper of *Notes* relating to reconciliation. That he had shown him the paper, and had been prevailed on to leave it with him a night, but it was on his lordship's solemn promise of returning it, which had been complied with, and he now returned it to me. That it seemed to have made an impression, and he had reason to believe that matter might be settled to our satisfaction toward the end of the treaty; but in his own mind he wished it might not be mentioned at the beginning. That his lordship indeed said he had not imagined reparation would be expected, and he wondered I should not know whether it was intended to demand it. Finally, Mr. Oswald acquainted me that as the business now likely to be brought forward more particularly appertained to the department of the other Secretary, Mr. Fox, he was directed to announce another agent coming from that department, who might be expected every day, viz: the Honorable Mr. Grenville, brother to Lord Temple, and son of the famous Mr. George Grenville, formerly Chancellor of the Exchequer. I immediately wrote the following note to Count de Vergennes:

## TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

" Passy, May 4th, 1782.

" Sir,

" I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency that Mr. Oswald is just returned from London, and is now with me. He has delivered me a letter from Lord Shelburne, which I enclose for your perusal, together with a copy of my letter, to which it is an answer. He tells me that it has been agreed in Council to treat at Paris, and to treat of a *general peace*; and that, as it is more particularly in the department of Mr. Fox, to regulate the circumstantial, a gentleman, Mr. Grenville, to be sent by him for that purpose, may be daily expected here. Mr. Oswald will wait on your Excellency whenever you shall think fit to receive him.

" I am, with respect, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN."

And the next day I received the following answer :

## THE COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

## Translation.

" Versailles, May 5th, 1782.

" Sir,

" I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write to me the 4th instant, as also those which accompanied it. I will see you with your friend, with pleasure, at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning.

" I have the honor to be, &amp;c.,

DE VERGENNES."

Accordingly, on Monday morning I went with Mr. Oswald to Versailles, and we saw the Minister. Mr. Oswald acquainted him with the disposition of his Court to treat for a general peace, and at Paris, and he announced Mr. Grenville, who he said was to set out about the same time with him; but, as he would probably come by way of Ostend, might be a few days longer on the road. Some general conversation passed, agreeable enough, but not of importance.

In our return, Mr. Oswald repeated to me his opinion, that the affair of Canada would be settled to our satisfaction, and his wish

that it might not be mentioned till towards the end of the treaty. He intimated, too, that it was apprehended the greatest obstructions in the treaty might come from the part of Spain; but said, if she was unreasonable, there were means to bring her to reason. That Russia was a friend to England, had lately made great discoveries on the back of North America, could make establishments there, and might easily transport an army from Kamschatka to the coast of Mexico, and conquer all those countries. This appeared a little visionary at present, but I did not dispute it.

On the whole, I was able to draw so little from Mr. Oswald of the sentiments of Lord Shelburne, who had mentioned him as entrusted with the communication of them, that I could not but wonder at his being sent again to me, especially as Mr. Grenville was so soon to follow.

On Tuesday I was at Court, as usual on that day. M. de Vergennes asked me if Mr. Oswald had not opened himself further to me? I acquainted him with the sight I had had of the minute of Council, and of the loose expressions contained in it of what was in contemplation. He seemed to think it odd that he had brought nothing more explicit. I supposed Mr. Grenville might be better furnished. The next morning, I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

“Passy, May 8th, 1782.

“Sir,

“Mr. Oswald, whom I mentioned in a former letter, which I find you have received, is returned, and brought me another letter from Lord Shelburne, of which the above is a copy. It says Mr. Oswald is instructed to communicate to me his lordship’s thoughts. He is, however, very sparing of such communication. All I have got from him is, that the Ministry have in contemplation the allowing independence to America, on condition of Britain being put again into the state she was left in by the peace of 1763, which I suppose means being put again in the possession of the islands which France has taken from her. This seems to me a proposition of selling to us a thing that was already our own, and making France pay the price they are pleased to ask for it.

“Mr. Grenville, who is sent by Mr. Fox, is expected here daily. Mr. Oswald tells me that Mr. Laurens will soon be here also.

Yours of the 2d instant is just come to hand. I shall write to you on this affair hereafter, by the Court couriers, for I am certain that your letters to me are opened at the post office, either here or in Holland, and I suppose that mine to you are treated in the same manner. I enclose the cover of your last, that you may see the seal.

“ With great respect, I am, sir, &c.,                    B. FRANKLIN.”

I had but just sent away this letter, when Mr. Oswald came in, bringing with him Mr. Grenville, who was just arrived. He gave me the following letter from Mr. Secretary Fox :

CHARLES J. FOX TO B. FRANKLIN.

“ St. James's, May 1st, 1782.

“ Sir,

“ Though Mr. Oswald will, no doubt, have informed you of the nature of Mr. Grenville's commission, yet I cannot refrain from making use of the opportunity that his going offers me to assure you of the esteem and respect which I have borne to your character, and to you to believe that no change in my situation has made any in those ardent wishes for reconciliation which I have invariably felt from the very beginning of this unhappy contest.

“ Mr. Grenville is fully acquainted with my sentiments upon this subject, and with the sanguine hopes which I have conceived, that those with whom we are contending are too reasonable to continue a contest which has no longer any object, either real or even imaginary. I know your liberality of mind too well to be afraid lest any prejudices against Mr. Grenville's *name* may prevent you from esteeming those excellent qualities of heart and head which belong to him, or from giving the fullest credit to the sincerity of his wishes for peace, in which no man in either country goes beyond him.

“ I am, with great truth and regard, &c.,                    “ C. J. FOX.”

I imagined the gentlemen had been at Versailles, as I supposed Mr. Grenville would first have waited on M. de Vergennes before he called on me. But finding, in conversation, that he had not, and that he expected me to introduce him, I immediately wrote to that Minister, acquainting him that Mr. Grenville was arrived, and desired to know when his Excellency would think fit to receive him, and I sent an express with my letter.



I then entered into conversation with him on the subject of his mission, Mr. Fox having referred me to him, as being fully acquainted with his sentiments. He said that peace was really wished for by everybody, if it could be obtained on reasonable terms; and as the idea of subjugating America was given up, and both France and America had thereby obtained what they had in view originally, it was hoped that there now remained no obstacle to a pacification. That England was willing to treat of a general peace with all the Powers at war against her, and that the treaty should be at Paris.

I did not press him much for further particulars, supposing they were reserved for our interview with M. de Vergennes. The gentlemen did me the honor of staying to dinner with me, on the supposition, which I urged, that my express might be back before we parted. This gave me an opportunity of a good deal of general conversation with Mr. Grenville, who appeared to me a sensible, judicious, intelligent, good tempered, and well instructed young man, answering well the character Mr. Fox had given me of him.

They left me, however, about six o'clock, and my messenger did not return till near nine. He brought me the answer of the Count de Vergennes, that he was glad to hear of Mr. Grenville's arrival, and would be ready to receive us to-morrow, at half past ten or eleven o'clock. I immediately enclosed his note in one to Mr. Grenville, requesting him to be with me at Passy by eight, that we might have time to breakfast before we set out. I have preserved no copy of these three last mentioned notes, or I should have inserted them, as I think that though they seem of almost too trifling a nature, they serve usefully to settle dates, authenticate facts, and show something of the turn and manner of thinking of the writers on particular occasions. The answer I received was as follows :

“ Mr. GRENVILLE presents his compliments to Mr. Franklin, and will certainly do himself the honor of waiting upon Mr. Franklin to-morrow morning, at eight o'clock.

“ Rue de Richelieu, Wednesday night.”

We set out accordingly the next morning in my coach, and arrived punctually at Count de Vergennes's, who received Mr. Grenville in the most cordial manner, on account of the acquaintance and friendship that had formerly subsisted between his uncle and the

Count de Vergennes, when they were Ambassadors together at Constantinople.

After some little agreeable conversation, Mr. Grenville presented his letters from Mr. Secretary Fox, and, I think, from the Duke of Richmond. When these were read, the subject of peace was entered upon. What my memory retains of the discourse amounts to little more than this, that, after mutual declarations of the good dispositions of the two Courts, Mr. Grenville having intimated that in case England gave America independence, France, it was expected, would restore the conquests she had made of British islands, receiving back those of Miquelon and St. Pierre. And the original object of the war being obtained, it was supposed that France would be contented with that. The Minister seemed to smile at the proposed exchange, and remarked, the offer of giving independence to America amounted to little. "America," said he, "does not ask it of you; there is Mr. Franklin, he will answer you as to that point." "To be sure," I said, "we do not consider ourselves as under any necessity of bargaining for a thing that is our own, which we have bought at the expense of much blood and treasure, and which we are in possession of." "As to our being satisfied with the original object of the war," continued he, "look back to the conduct of your nation in former wars. In the last war, for example, what was the object? It was the disputed right to some waste lands on the Ohio and the frontiers of Nova Scotia. Did you content yourselves with the recovery of those lands? No, you retained at the peace all Canada, all Louisiana, all Florida, Granada, and other West India islands, the greatest part of the northern fisheries, with all your conquests in Africa and the East Indies." Something being mentioned of its not being reasonable that a nation, after making an unprovoked and unsuccessful war upon its neighbors, should expect to sit down whole, and have every thing restored which she had lost in such a war, I think Mr. Grenville remarked, the war had been provoked by the encouragement given by France to the Americans to revolt. On which the Count de Vergennes grew a little warm, and declared firmly that the breach was made, and our independence declared, long before we received the least encouragement from France; and he defied the world to give the smallest proof to the contrary. "There sits," said he, "Mr.

Franklin, who knows the fact, and can contradict me if I do not speak the truth."

He repeated to Mr. Grenville what he had before said to Mr. Oswald respecting the King's intention of treating fairly and keeping faithfully the conventions he should enter into, of which disposition he should give at the treaty convincing proofs by the fidelity and exactitude with which he should observe his engagements with his present allies, and added, that the points which the King had chiefly in view were *justice* and *dignity*; these he could not depart from. He acquainted Mr. Grenville that he should immediately write to Spain and Holland, communicate to those Courts what had passed, and request their answers; that in the mean time he hoped Mr. Grenville would find means of amusing himself agreeably, to which he should be glad to contribute; that he would communicate what had passed to the King, and he invited him to come again the next day.

On our return Mr. Grenville expressed himself as not quite satisfied with some part of the Count de Vergennes's discourse, and was thoughtful. He told me that he had brought two State messengers with him; and, perhaps, after he had another interview with the Minister, he might despatch one of them to London. I then requested leave to answer, by that opportunity, the letters I had received from Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox, and he kindly promised to acquaint me in time of the messenger's departure. He did not ask me to go with him the next day to Versailles, and I did not offer it.

The coming and going of these gentlemen were observed, and made much talk at Paris; and the Marquis de la Fayette having learned something of their business from the Minister, discoursed with me about it. Agreeably to the resolutions of Congress directing me to confer with him, and take his assistance in our affairs, I communicated to him what had passed. He told me that during the treaty at Paris for the last peace, the Duc de Nivernois had been sent to reside in London, that this Court might, through him, state what was, from time to time, transacted in the light they thought best, to prevent misrepresentations and misunderstandings. That such an employ would be extremely agreeable to him on many accounts; that as he was now an American citizen, spoke both

languages, and was well acquainted with our interests, he believed he might be useful in it; and that as peace was likely, from appearances, to take place, his return to America was perhaps not so immediately necessary. I liked the idea, and encouraged his proposing it to the Ministry. He then wished I would make him acquainted with Messrs. Oswald and Grenville; and for that end proposed meeting them at breakfast with me, which I promised to contrive if I could, and endeavor to engage them for Saturday.

Friday morning, the 10th of May, I went to Paris, and visited Mr. Oswald. I found him in the same friendly dispositions, and very desirous of good, and seeing an end put to this ruinous war. But I got no further sight as to the sentiment of Lord Shelburne respecting the terms. I told him the Marquis de la Fayette would breakfast with me to-morrow; and as he (Mr. Oswald) might have some curiosity to see a person who had, in this war, rendered himself so remarkable, I proposed his doing me the same honor. He agreed to it cheerfully. I came home intending to write to Mr. Grenville, who, I supposed, might stay and dine at Versailles, and therefore did not call on him. But he was returned, and I found the following note from him:

“ Paris, May 10th.

“ Mr. GRENVILLE presents his compliments to Mr. Franklin; he proposes sending a courier to England at ten o'clock to-night, and will give him in charge any letters Mr. Franklin may wish to send by him.”

I sat down immediately and wrote the two short letters following to the Secretaries of State:

TO MR. SECRETARY FOX.

“ Passy, May 10th, 1782.

“ Sir,

“ I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Grenville, whom I find to be a sensible, judicious, and amiable gentleman. The name, I assure you, does not, with me, lessen the regard his excellent qualities inspire. I introduced him as soon as possible to Count de Vergennes; he will himself give you an account of his reception. I hope his coming may forward the blessed work

of pacification, in which, for the sake of humanity, no time should be lost, no reasonable cause, as you observe, existing at present for the continuance of this abominable war. Be assured of my endeavors to put an end to it.

“I am much flattered by the good opinion of a person I have long highly esteemed, and I hope it will not be lessened by my conduct in the affair that has given rise to our correspondence.

“With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

“B. FRANKLIN.”

TO LORD SHELBURNE.

“Passy, May 10th, 1782.

“My Lord,

“I have received the honor of your lordship’s letter, dated the 28th past, by Mr. Oswald, informing me that he is sent back to settle with me the preliminaries of time and place. Paris, as the place, seemed to me yesterday to be agreed on between Mr. Grenville and M. de Vergennes, and is perfectly agreeable to me. The time cannot well be settled till this Court has received answers from Madrid and the Hague, and until my colleagues are arrived. I expect daily Messrs. Jay and Laurens. Mr. Adams doubts whether he can be here, but that will not hinder our proceeding.

“It gave me great pleasure to hear Mr. Laurens is discharged entirely from the obligations he had entered into. I am much obliged by the readiness with which your lordship has conferred that favor. Please to accept my thankful acknowledgments.

“I am happy, too, in understanding from your letter that transports are actually preparing to convey our prisoners to America, and that attention will be paid to their accommodation and good treatment. Those people on their return will be dispersed through every part of America, and the accounts they will have to give of any marks of kindness received by them under the present Ministry, will lessen much the resentment of their friends against the nation for the hardships they suffered under the *past*.

“Mr. Oswald rests here awhile by my advice, as I think his presence likely to be useful.

“With great and sincere respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

“B. FRANKLIN.”

And I sent them to Mr. Grenville, with the following note :

“ Mr. FRANKLIN presents his compliments to Mr. Grenville, and thanks him for the information of his courier's departure, and his kind offer of forwarding Mr. Franklin's letter ; he accepts the favor, and encloses two.

“ The Marquis de la Fayette and Mr. Oswald will do Mr. Franklin the honor of breakfasting with him to-morrow, between nine and ten o'clock. Mr. Franklin will also be happy to have the company of Mr. Grenville, if agreeable to him. He should have waited upon Mr. Grenville to-day at Paris, but he imagined Mr. Grenville was at Versailles.

“ Passy, Friday evening, May 10th.”

To which Mr. Grenville sent me this answer :

“ Mr. GRENVILLE presents his compliments to Mr. Franklin, and will, with great pleasure, do himself the honor of breakfasting with Mr. Franklin to-morrow, between nine and ten o'clock. Mr. Grenville was at Versailles to-day, and should have been sorry if Mr. Franklin should have given himself the trouble of calling at Paris this morning. The courier shall certainly take particular care of Mr. Franklin's letters.

“ Paris, Friday, May 10th.”

The gentlemen all met accordingly, had a good deal of conversation at, and after breakfast, staid till after one o'clock, and parted much pleased with each other.

The Monday following I called to visit Mr. Grenville. I found with him Mr. Oswald, who told me he was just about returning to London. I was a little surprised at the suddenness of the resolution he had taken, it being, as he said, to set out the next morning early. I conceived the gentleman was engaged in business, so I withdrew, and went to write a few letters, among which was the following to Lord Shelburne, being really concerned at the thought of losing so good a man as Mr. Oswald :

TO LORD SHELBURNE.

“ Passy, May 16th, 1782.

“ My Lord,

“ I did myself the honor of writing to your lordship a few days

since by Mr. Grenville's courier, acknowledging the receipt of yours of the 28th past, by Mr. Oswald.

"I then hoped that gentleman would have remained here some time; but his affairs, it seems, recall him sooner than he imagined. I hope he will return again, as I esteem him more the more I am acquainted with him, and believe his moderation, prudent counsels, and sound judgment may contribute much, not only to the speedy conclusion of a peace, but to the framing such a peace as may be firm and lasting.

"With great respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN."

I went in the evening to Mr. Oswald's lodging with my letters, when he informed me his intention was to return immediately hither from England, and, to make the more despatch in going and returning, he should leave his carriage at Calais, as the embarking and debarking of carriages in the packet boats often occasioned a tide's delay. I did not inquire the reason of this movement. We had but little conversation, for, Mr. Grenville coming in, I soon after wished him a good journey, and retired, that I might not interrupt their consultations.

Since his departure, Mr. Grenville has made me a visit; and entering into conversation with me, exactly of the same tenor with the letters I formerly received from Mr. Hartley, stating suppositions that France might insist on points totally different from what had been the object of our alliance, and that, in such case, he should imagine we were not at all bound to continue the war to obtain such points for her, &c. I thought I could not give him a better answer to this kind of discourse than what I had given in two letters to Mr. Hartley, and, therefore, calling for those letters, I read them to him. He smiled, and would have turned the conversation; but I gave a little more of my sentiments on the general subject of benefits, obligation, and gratitude. I said I thought people had often imperfect notions of their duty on those points, and that a state of obligation was to many so uneasy a state, that they became ingenious in finding out reasons and arguments to prove that they had been laid under no obligation at all, or that they had discharged it, and they too easily satisfied themselves with such arguments.

To explain clearly my ideas on the subject I stated a case. A, a stranger to B, sees him about to be imprisoned for a debt by a

merciless creditor; he lends him the sum necessary to preserve his liberty. B then becomes the debtor of A, and, after some time, repays the money. Has he then discharged the obligation? No. He has discharged the money debt, but the obligation remains, and he is a debtor for the kindness of A in lending him the sum so seasonably. If B should afterwards find A in the same circumstances, that he, B, had been in when A lent him the money, he may then discharge this obligation or debt of kindness *in part*, by lending him an equal sum. *In part*, I said, and not *wholly*, because, when A lent B the money, there had been no prior benefit received to induce him to it. And, therefore, if A should a second time need the same assistance, I thought B, if in his power, was in duty bound to afford it to him.

Mr. Grenville conceived that it was carrying gratitude very far to apply this doctrine to our situation in respect to France, who was really the party served and obliged by our separation from England, as it lessened the power of her rival and relatively increased her own.

I told him I was so strongly impressed with the kind assistance afforded us by France in our distress, and the generous and noble manner in which it was granted without exacting or stipulating for a single privilege, or particular advantage to herself in our commerce, or otherwise, that I could never suffer myself to think of such reasonings for lessening the obligation; and I hoped, and indeed did not doubt, but my countrymen were all of the same sentiments.

Thus he gained nothing of the point he came to push; we parted, however, in good humor. His conversation is always polite, and his manner pleasing. As he expressed a strong desire to discourse with me on the means of a reconciliation with America, I promised to consider the subject, and appointed Saturday, the first day of June, for our conversation, when he proposed to call on me. The same day I received another letter from my old friend, Mr. Hartley. Our former correspondence on the subject of peace since the beginning of this year I have kept by itself, as it preceded this, was in the time of the old Ministry, and consisted wholly of letters unmingled with personal conversation. This being the first letter from him under the new Ministry, and as it may be followed by others which may relate to the negotiation, I insert it here, with my answer, and shall continue to insert the future letters I may receive from him relative to the same subject.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

"London, May 3d, 1782.

"My dear Friend,

"I write to you only one line, just to inform you that a general order is issued by our Government for the release of all the American prisoners every where. I have had this from Lord Shelburne, who informed me that the order was not partial or conditional, but general and absolute. I heartily congratulate you upon this first step towards *sweet reconciliation*. I hope other things will follow. I had a long conversation with Lord Shelburne relating to America, in which he expressed himself in most favorable terms. I shall have the honor of seeing and conversing with you again. But at present, as you know, certain matters are depending from your side of the water.

"Mr. Laurens is entirely at liberty. I see him very frequently, and when you see him he will tell you many things from me which have occurred to me in my poor endeavors to promote the cause of peace. *Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris.*

"Your affectionate, &c., DAVID HARTLEY."

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

"Passy, May 13th, 1782.

"My dear Friend,

"I have just received your favor of the 3d instant, I thank you much for the good news you give me, that 'an order is issued by your Government for the release of all the American prisoners *every where*, an order not *partial* or *conditional*, but *general* and *absolute*.' I rejoice with you in this step, not only on account of the unhappy captives, who, by it, will be set at liberty, and restored to their friends and families, but, as I think, it will tend greatly towards a reconciliation, on which alone the hope of a durable peace can be founded. I am much indebted to your good brother for a very kind and obliging letter, which was mislaid when it should have been answered. I beg you would present to him my thankful acknowledgments and my very sincere respects. I join with you most heartily in the prayer that ends your letter—*Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris.*

"I am ever, my friend, yours most affectionately,

"B. FRANKLIN."

Our business standing still at present, till the return of Mr. Oswald, gives me a void that I may fill up with two or three circumstances not at present connected with this intended treaty, but which serve to show something of the disposition of Courts who have, or may have, a concern in it.

Mr. Jay had written to me, from time to time, of the unaccountable delays he had met with since his residence at the Court of Spain, and that he was now no nearer in the business he had been charged with than when he first arrived. Upon the first coming of Mr. Oswald, and the apparent prospect of a treaty, I wrote to press his coming hither; and, being a little out of humor with that Court, I said they have taken four years to consider whether they should treat with us—give them forty, and let us mind our own business; and I sent the letter under cover to a person at Madrid, who, I hoped, would open and read it.

It seems to me, that we have in most instances, hurt our credit and importance, by sending all over Europe, begging alliances, and soliciting declarations of our independence. The nations, perhaps; from thence seemed to think that our independence is something they have to sell, and that we do not offer enough for it. Mr. Adams has succeeded in Holland, owing to their war with England, and a good deal to the late votes in the Commons towards a reconciliation; but the Ministers of the other Powers refused, as I hear, to return his visits, because our independence was not yet acknowledged by their Courts. I had heard here, by good luck, that the same resolution was taken by several of them not to return the visits I should make them (as they suppose) when I was first received here as Minister Plenipotentiary, and disappointed their project by visiting none of them. In my private opinion, the first civility is due from the old residents to the stranger and new comer. My opinion indeed is good for nothing against custom, which I should have obeyed, but for the circumstances that rendered it more prudent to avoid disputes and affronts, though at the hazard of being thought rude or singular.

While I am writing, something ridiculous enough on this head has happened to me. The Count du Nord, who is son of the Empress of Russia, arriving at Paris, ordered, it seems, cards of visit to be sent to all the Foreign Ministers. One of them, on which was written, "*Le Comte du Nord et le Prince Bariatinski*," was brought to me. It was on Monday evening last. Being at Court the next

day, I inquired of an old Minister, my friend, what was the etiquette and whether the Count received visits. The answer was, *Non ; on se fait écrire ; voila tout*. This is done by passing the door, and ordering your name to be written on the porter's book. Accordingly, on Wednesday I passed the house of Prince Bariatinski, Ambassador of Russia, where the Count lodged, and left my name on the list of each. I thought no more of the matter ; but this day, May the 24th, comes the servant who brought the card, in great affliction, saying he was like to be ruined by his mistake in bringing the card here, and wishing to obtain from me some paper, of I know not what kind, for I did not see him. In the afternoon came my friend, Mr. Leroy, who is also a friend of the Prince's, telling me how much he, the Prince, was concerned at the accident, that both himself and the Count had great personal regard for me and my character, but that our independence not yet being acknowledged by the Court of Russia, it was impossible for him to permit himself to make me a visit as Minister. I told M. Leroy it was not my custom to seek such honors, though I was very sensible of them when conferred upon me ; that I should not have voluntarily intruded a visit, and that, in this case, I had only done what I was informed the etiquette required of me ; but if it would be attended with any inconvenience to Prince Bariatinski, whom I much esteemed and respected, I thought the remedy was easy—he had only to erase my name out of his book of visits received, and I would burn their card.

All the northern Princes are not ashamed of a little civility committed towards an American. The King of Denmark, travelling in England under an assumed name, sent me a card expressing, in strong terms, his esteem for me, and inviting me to dinner with him at St. James's. And the Ambassador from the King of Sweden lately asked me whether I had powers to make a treaty of commerce with their kingdom ; for, he said, his master was desirous of such a treaty with the United States, had directed him to ask me the question, and had charged him to tell me that it would flatter him greatly to make it with a person whose character he so much esteemed, &c. Such compliments might make me a little proud, if we Americans were not naturally as much so already as the porter, who, being told he had with his burthen jostled the great Czar, Peter, then in London, walking the street : "*Poh !*" says he, "*we are all Czars here !*"

I did not write by Mr. Oswald to Mr. Laurens, because, from some expressions in his last to me, I expected him here; and I desired Mr. Oswald, if he found him still in London, or met him on the road, to give him that reason. I am disappointed in my expectation; for I have now received (May 25th) the following letter from him:

HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN.

“Ostend, May 17th, 1782.

“Sir,

“I had the honor of addressing you on the 30th ultimo by post, a duplicate of which will accompany this, in order to guard against the effect of a miscarriage in the first instance, and I beg leave to refer you to the contents.

“On the 10th current, and no sooner, your very obliging favor of the 20th preceding reached me in London. Being then on the point of leaving that place, I deferred a reply until my arrival on this side. This happened yesterday, too late to catch the post of the day, except by a single letter, put into my hands, I believe, by Dr. Price, which I sent forward.

“I sincerely and heartily thank you, sir, for the cordial contents of your last letter; but from the most mature reflection, and taking into consideration my present very infirm state of health, I have resolved to decline accepting the honor intended me by Congress in the Commission for treating with Great Britain; and I find the less difficulty in coming to this determination, from a persuasion in my own mind that my assistance is not essential, and that it was not the view or expectation of our constituents that every one named in the Commission should act. I purpose to repair to, or near, Mr. Adams, and inquire of him whether I may yet be serviceable under the Commission to which I had been first appointed—that for borrowing money for the use of the United States. If he speaks in the affirmative, I shall, though much against my own grain, as is well known at our little Court, proceed in the mission with diligence and fidelity; otherwise I shall take a convenient opportunity of returning to give an account there of having, in the course of two years and upwards, done nothing, excepting only the making a great number of rebels in the enemy's country, and reconciling thousands to the doctrine of absolute and unlimited independence—a doctrine

which I asserted and maintained with as much freedom in the Tower of London as I ever had done in the State House at Philadelphia; and having contentedly submitted to the loss of my estate, and being ready to lay down my life in support of it, I had the satisfaction of perceiving the coming of converts every day. I must not, however, conclude this head without assuring you that, should you think proper to ask questions respecting American commerce, or the interest of any particular State, I will answer with candor and the best judgment I am possessed of; but of that judgment I sincerely protest I have the utmost diffidence. God prosper your proceedings in the great work. You shall be called blessed by all the grateful of the present generation, and your name will be celebrated by posterity. I feel myself happy in reflecting that in the great outlines of a treaty our opinions exactly coincide; that we shall not want the countenance and assistance of our great and good ally; and that you have so honest a man as Mr. Oswald to deal with for preliminaries. I know him to be superior to chicanery, and am sure he will not defile his mind by attempting any dirty thing.

“I entreat you, sir, to present my humble respects to M. de Vergennes, and thank his Excellency for his polite expressions respecting me, and be so good as to say all that shall appear necessary in excuse for my non-appearance at his Court.

“Lord Cornwallis called on me the day before I left London, and was, as you may suppose, very anxious to know when he might probably hear from me on the subject of his release; let me, therefore, request your opinion in answer to what I had the honor of writing in my last concerning that affair. I wish it may prove satisfactory to his lordship, by enabling me, with your consent and concurrence, to cancel a debt which does not sit easy upon me, and which cannot with honor to our country remain unpaid. I think we shall not, it is impossible we should, incur displeasure by doing an act of common justice, and our authority may be fairly implied.

“His lordship declares he has no intention of returning to America, but desires to be reinstated in his legislative and military character in his own country; and I am of opinion, that in the former he will rather be friendly to us than otherwise. For my own part, if the war continues, I should not be uneasy if his lordship were to go to the Chesapeake again.

“I have a thousand compliments and good wishes to present to you from friends in England, where, males and females, I am sure you have at least so many, that your own remembrance will lead you to individuals of your old acquaintance.

“To-morrow I intend to proceed to Brussels, and thence, probably, to the Hague and Amsterdam; my movements must, unavoidably, be as slow as water carriage. My weak under limbs cannot bear continual thumping on the pavement in the rough machines of this country, and the feebleness of my pocket will not admit the indulgence of a more convenient vehicle. I beg, sir, you will write to me at the house of Mr. Edward Jennings, or under the protection of any other friend in that city, that will be at the trouble of finding out a voyager, who is at all times, and in all places, with the highest esteem and respect, sir, &c.,

“HENRY LAURENS.”

To the above I wrote the following answer :

TO HENRY LAURENS.

“Passy, May 25th, 1782.

“Sir,

“I am now honored with yours of the 17th. I had before received one of the 7th, which remained unanswered, because from the words in it, ‘when I reach the Continent, which will probably happen in a few days,’ I flattered myself with the pleasure of seeing you here. That hope is disappointed by your last, in which you tell me you are determined not to act in the Commission for treating of peace with Great Britain. I regret your taking this resolution, principally because I am persuaded that your assistance must have been of great service to our country. But I have besides some private or particular reasons that relate to myself.

“To encourage me in the arduous task, you kindly tell me I shall be called *blessed*, &c. I have never yet known of a peace made that did not occasion a great deal of popular discontent, clamor, and censure on both sides. This is, perhaps, owing to the usual management of the leaders and Ministers of the contending nations, who, to keep up the spirits of their people for continuing the war, generally represent the state of their own affairs in a better light, and that of the enemy in a worse, than is consistent with the truth ;

hence the populace on each side expect better terms than can really be obtained, and are apt to ascribe their disappointment to treachery. Thus the peace of Utrecht, and that of Aix la Chapelle, were said in England to have been influenced by French gold, and in France by English guineas. Even the last peace—the most glorious and advantageous for England that ever she made—was, you may remember, violently decried, and the makers as violently abused. So that the blessing promised to peace-makers, I fancy, relates to the next world; for in this they seem to have a greater chance of being cursed. And, as another text observes, that in *‘the multitude of counsellors there is safety,’* which, I think, may mean safety to the counsellors as well as to the counselled, because, if they commit a fault in counselling, the blame does not fall upon one or a few, but is divided among many, and the share of each is so much the lighter; or because, when a number of honest men are concerned, the suspicion of their being biased is weaker, as being more improbable; or because, *defendit numerus*; for all these reasons, but especially for the support your established character of integrity would afford me against the attacks of enemies, if this treaty take place, and I am to act in it, I wish for your presence, and the presence of as many of the Commissioners as possible, and I hope you will reconsider and change your resolution.

“In the mean time, as you have had opportunities of conversing with the new Ministers, and other leading people of England, and of learning their sentiments relating to terms of peace, &c., I request you would inform me by letters of what you think important. Letters from you will come safer by the Court courier than by the post; and I desire you would, if you should continue determined not to act, communicate to me your ideas of the terms to be insisted on, and the points to be attended to respecting commerce, fisheries, boundaries, and every other material circumstance that may be of importance to all or any of the United States.

“Lord Shelburne having written to me on the subject of the wished-for peace, I acquainted him in my answer, sent by our friend, Mr. Oswald, that you were one of the Commissioners appointed by Congress to treat with Britain; and that I imagined his lordship would, therefore, think proper to discharge you entirely from the obligations you entered into when you were admitted to bail, that you might be at liberty to act freely in the Commission.

He wrote to me in reply that you were accordingly discharged immediately. His lordship mentioned nothing of any exchange being expected for you ; nevertheless I honor your sensibility on the point, and your concern for the credit of America, that she should not be outdone in generosity by Great Britain, and will cheerfully join with you in any act that you may think proper to discharge in return the parole of Lord Cornwallis, as far as in our power may lie ; but we have no express authority for that purpose, and the Congress may possibly, in the mean time, have made some other arrangement relative to his exchange. I conceive that our acts should contain a clause reserving to Congress the final approbation or disallowance of the proceeding ; and I have some doubt whether Lord Cornwallis will think himself well freed of his engagements, and at liberty to exercise his military employments, by virtue of any concession in his favor made by persons who are not vested with authority for that purpose. So that, on the whole, perhaps the best and surest way will be our writing immediately to Congress, and strongly recommending the measure. However, I will do what you shall think best.

“ I heartily wish you success in any endeavors you may use in Holland for raising a loan of money. We have pressed rather too hard on this Court, and we still want more than they can conveniently spare us ; but I am sorry that too scrupulous regard to our wants and difficulties should induce you, under the present infirmity of your lower limbs, to deny yourself the necessary comfort of an easy carriage, rather than make any use of the public assistance, when the public must be much in your debt. I beg you would get over that difficulty, and take of me what you may have occasion for.

“ The letter you forwarded to me was from America’s constant friend, the good Bishop of St. Asaph. He speaks of you in terms of the highest esteem and respect.

“ Mr. Oswald has gone back again to London, but intended to return again immediately. Mr. Grenville remains here, and has received power to treat ; but no further steps can be taken till Spain and Holland have empowered Ministers for the same purpose.

“ I shall inform you and Mr. Adams (if he does not come) of the proceeding from time to time, and request your counsel in cases of any difficulty. I hope you will not think of hazarding a return to America before a peace, if we find any hopes of its being soon



obtained; and that, if you do not find you can be useful in the manner you wish in Holland, you will make me happy by your company and counsel here.

“With great and sincere esteem, &c.,      B. FRANKLIN.”

May the 26th, I received the following letters and papers from Mr. Hartley :

[One of these letters is dated May 1st, which, together with a paper called the *Breviate*, is printed above, pp. 249, 254.]

DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

“London, May 13th, 1782.

“My dear Friend,

“I wrote you a long letter, dated May 1st, 1782, by Mr. Laurens, who left London on Saturday last, but I will add a few lines now by a conveyance which I believe will overtake him, just to tell you two or three things which I believe I omitted in my last. Perhaps they may not be of any consequence, but as they relate to my own conduct I could wish to have you understand them.

“After several conferences with the late Ministry, I gave in the paper called the *Breviate*, on the 7th of February, but I never received any answer from them. They resigned on the 20th of March. Upon the accession of the new Ministry, I heard nothing from them upon the subject, nor indeed did I apply to them. I did not know whether that paper would not come into their hands by succession, and I doubted whether it might not be more proper for me to wait till I heard from them. While I remained doubtful about this, I received your letters, which determined me to go to Lord Shelburne. This was about the beginning of the present month. I communicated to him some extracts, such as those about the prisoners, &c., and likewise the whole of your letter of April 13th, containing the offer of the late Ministry, the King of France’s answer, together with your reflections in the conclusion respecting peace. As you had given me a general permission, I left with him a copy of the whole letter.

“Upon the occasion of this interview, Lord Shelburne told me that he had made much inquiry in the offices for the correspondence and papers which had passed between the late Ministry and me, but that he could not meet with them. He expressed a regret that he

had not conversed with me at an earlier day, with many civilities of that kind. In short, I had been backward to intrude myself, and he expressed regret that he had not sent for me.

“Upon this opening on his part, I stated to him the substance of what passed between the late Ministry and myself, and I left a copy of the *Breviate* with him. He gave me a very attentive audience, and I took that opportunity of stating my sentiments to him, as far as I could, upon every view of the question. Upon his expressing his regret that he had not seen me sooner, I told him that I always had been, and always should be, most ready to give any assistance in my power towards the work of peace. I say the same to you.

“I do not believe that there is any difference of sentiment between you and me, *personally*, in our own minds upon independence, &c., &c. But we belong to different communities, and the right of judgment, and of consent and dissent, is vested in the community. Divide independence into six millions of shares, and you should have been heartily *welcome* to *my* share from the beginning of the war. Divide Canada into six millions of shares, I could find a better method of disposing of *my* share than by offering it to France to abandon America. Divide the rock of Gibraltar into six millions of pieces, I can only answer for one portion. Let reason and justice decide in any such case, as universal umpires between contending parties, and those who wish well to the permanent peace of mankind will not refuse to give and to receive equal justice.

“I agree with you that the equitable and the philosophical principles of politics can alone form a solid foundation of permanent peace; and the contraries to them, though highly patronized by nations themselves and their Ministers, are no better than vulgar errors; but nations are slow to convictions from the personal arguments of individuals. ‘They are jealous in honor, seeking the *bubble reputation* even in the cannon’s mouth.’ But until a confirmed millennium, founded upon wiser principles, shall be generally established, the *reputation* of nations is not merely a *bubble*. It forms their real security.

“To apply all this, in one word, let all nations agree, with one accord, to beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, or give me wooden walls to Great Britain! I have nothing further to add. My reason for writing this was just to communicate to you in what position I had delivered over my

conferences and arguments with the late Ministry into the hands of the present. And I will conclude with your own words, may God send us all more wisdom.

“ I am ever, most affectionately, yours, &c.,

“ D. HARTLEY.

“ P. S. *May 17th*, 1782. Since writing the above, I have likewise left a copy of the enclosed preliminaries with Lord Shelburne.

“ *Preliminaries.*

“ *May*, 1782.

“ 1. That the British troops shall be withdrawn from the Thirteen Provinces of North America, and a truce made between Great Britain and the said Provinces for \_\_\_\_\_ years. (Suppose ten or twenty years.)

“ 2. That a negotiation for peace shall *bona fide* be opened between Great Britain and the allies of America.

“ 3. If the proposed negotiation between Great Britain and the allies of America should not succeed so far as to produce peace, but that war should continue between the said parties, that America should act, and be treated as a neutral nation.

“ 4. That whenever peace shall take place between Great Britain and the allies of America, the truce between Great Britain and America shall be converted into a perpetual peace, the independence of America shall be admitted and guaranteed by Great Britain, and a commercial treaty settled between them.

“ 5. That these propositions shall be made to the Court of France, for communication to the American Commissioners, and for an answer to the Court of Great Britain.”

The same day Mr. Grenville visited me. He acquainted me that his courier was returned, and had brought him full powers in form to treat for a peace *with France and her allies*; that he had been at Versailles, and had shown his power to M. de Vergennes, and left a copy with him; that he had also a letter of credence, which he was not to deliver till France should think fit to send a Minister of the same kind to London; that M. de Vergennes had told him that he would lay it before the King, and had desired to see him again on Wednesday; that Mr. Oswald had arrived in London, about an hour before the courier came away; that Mr. Fox in his letter had

charged him to thank me for that which I had written, and to tell me that he hoped I would never forget that he and I were of the same country.

I answered, that I should always esteem it an honor to be owned as a countryman of Mr. Fox. He had requested me, at our last interview, that, if I saw no impropriety in doing it, I would favor him with a sight of the treaty of alliance between France and America. I acquainted him that it was printed, but that if he could not readily meet with a copy I would have one written for him. And as he had not been able to find one, I this day gave it to him.

He lent me a London Gazette containing Admiral Rodney's account of his victory over M. de Grasse, and the accounts of other successes in the East Indies, assuring me, however, that these events made not the least change in the sincere desire of his Court to treat for peace.

In the afternoon, the Marquis de la Fayette called upon me. I acquainted him with what Mr. Grenville had told me respecting the credential letter, and the expectation that a person on the part of this Court would be sent to London with a commission similar to his. The Marquis told me he was on his way to Versailles, and should see M. de Vergennes. We concluded that it would now be proper for him to make the proposition we had before talked of, that he should be the person employed in that service.

On Monday, the 27th, I received a letter from Mr. Jay, dated the 8th, acquainting me that he had received mine of the 21st and 22d past, and had concluded to set out for Paris about the 19th, so that he may be expected in a few days.

I dined this day with Count d'Estaing, and a number of brave marine officers that he had invited. We were all a little dejected with the news, I mentioned, by way of encouragement, the observation of the Turkish bashaw who was taken with his fleet at Lepanto, by the Venetians. "Ships," says he, "are like my master's beard; you may cut it, but it will grow again. He has cut off from your government all the Morea, which is like a limb, which you will never recover." And his words proved true.

On Tuesday I dined at Versailles with some friends, so was not at home when the Marquis de la Fayette called to acquaint me that M. de Vergennes informed him that the full power received by Mr.

Grenville from London, and communicated by him, related to France only. The Marquis left for me this information, which I could not understand. On Wednesday I was at Court, and saw the copy of the power. It appeared full with regard to treating with France, but mentioned not a word of her allies; and, as M. de Vergennes had explicitly and constantly, from the beginning, declared to the several messengers, Mr. Forth, Mr. Oswald, and Mr. Grenville, that France could only treat in concert with her allies, and it had in consequence been declared, on the part of the British Ministry, that they consented to treat for a general peace, and at Paris, the sending this partial power seemed to be insidious, and a mere invention to occasion delay, the late disasters to the French fleet having probably given the Court of England fresh courage and other views.

M. de Vergennes said he should see Mr. Grenville on Thursday, and would speak his mind to him on the subject very plainly. "They want," said he, "to treat with us for you, but this the King will not agree to. He thinks it not consistent with the dignity of your State. You will treat for yourselves; and every one of the Powers at war with England will make its own treaty. All that is necessary for our common security is, that the treaties go hand in hand, and are signed all on the same day."

Prince Bariatinski, the Russian Ambassador, was particularly civil to me this day at Court, apologised for what passed relating to the visit, expressed himself extremely sensible of my friendship in covering the affair, which might have occasioned to him very disagreeable consequences, &c. The Count du Nord came to M. de Vergennes while we were drinking coffee, after dinner. He appears lively and active, with a sensible, spirited countenance. There was an opera at night for his entertainment. The house being richly finished with abundance of carving and gilding, well illuminated with wax tapers, and the company all superbly dressed, many of the men in cloth of tissue, and the ladies sparkling with diamonds, formed altogether the most splendid spectacle my eyes ever beheld.

I had some little conference to-day with MM. Berkenrode, Vanderpierre, and Boeris, the Ambassador of Holland, and the agents of the Dutch East India Company. They informed me that the second letter of Mr. Fox to the mediating Minister of Russia,

proposing a separate peace with Holland, made no more impression than the first, and no peace would be made but in concurrence with France.

The Swedish Minister told me he expected orders from his Court relative to a treaty, &c.

I had, at our last interview, given Mr. Grenville a rendezvous for Saturday morning, and having some other engagements for Thursday and Friday, though I wish to speak with him on the subject of his power, I did not go to him, but waited his coming to me on Saturday. On Friday, May 31st, Mr. Oswald called on me, being just returned, and brought me the following letters from Lord Shelburne, the first of which had been written before his arrival :

## LORD SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN.

“ Whitehall, May 28th, 1762.

“ Sir,

“ I am honored with your letter of the 10th instant, and am very glad to find that the conduct which the King has empowered me to observe towards Mr. Laurens and the American prisoners has given you pleasure. I have signified to Mr. Oswald his Majesty's pleasure that he shall continue at Paris till he receives orders from hence to return. In the present state of this business, there is nothing for me to add but my sincere wishes for a happy issue, and to repeat my assurances that nothing shall be wanting on my part which can contribute to it.

“ I have the honor to be, with very great regard,

“ SHELBURNE.”

## LORD SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN.

“ Whitehall, May 29th, 1762.

“ Sir,

“ I have the honor to receive your letter of the 13th of May by Mr. Oswald. It gives me great pleasure to find my opinion of the moderation, prudence, and judgment of that gentleman confirmed by your concurrence ; or I am glad to assure you that we likewise concur in hoping that those qualities may enable him to contribute to the speedy conclusion of a peace, and such a peace as may be firm and long lasting. In that hope he has the King's orders to

return immediately to Paris; and you will find him, I trust, properly instructed to coöperate in so desirable an object.

“I have the honor to be, &c.,

SHELBURNE.”

I had not then time to converse much with Mr. Oswald, and he promised to come and breakfast with me on Monday.

*Saturday, June 5th.* Mr. Grenville came according to appointment. Our conversation began by my acquainting him that I had seen the Count de Vergennes, and had perused the copy left with him of the power to treat. That after what he, Mr. Grenville, told me of its being to treat with France *and her allies*, I was a little surprised to find in it no mention of the allies, and that it was only to treat with the King of France and his Ministers; that at Versailles there was some suspicion of its being intended to occasion delay, the professed desire of a speedy peace being, perhaps, abated in the British Court since its late successes; but that I imagined the words relating to the allies might have been accidentally omitted in transcribing, or that, perhaps, he had a special power to treat with us distinct from the other. He answered, that the copy was right, and that he had no such power in form, but that his instructions were full to that purpose, and he was sure the Ministers had no desire of delay, nor any of excluding us from the treaty, since the greatest part of those instructions related to treating with me. That, to convince me of the sincerity of his Court respecting us, he would acquaint me with one of his instructions, though, perhaps, the doing it now was premature, and therefore a little inconsistent with the character of a politician, but he had that confidence in me that he should not hesitate to inform me, (though he wished that at present it should go no further,) *he was instructed to acknowledge the independence of America previous to the commencement of the treaty.* And he said he could only account for the omission of America in the POWER, by supposing that it was an old official form, copied from that given to Mr. Stanley when he came over hither before the last peace. Mr. Grenville added, that he had, immediately after his interview with the Count de Vergennes, despatched a courier to London, and hoped that, with his return, the difficulty would be removed. That he was perfectly assured their late success had made no change in the disposition of his Court to peace, and that he had

more reason than the Count de Vergennes to complain of delays, since five days were spent before he could obtain a passport for his courier, and then it was not to go and return by way of Calais, but to go by Ostend, which would occasion a delay of five days longer. Mr. Grenville then spoke much of the high opinion the present Ministry had of me, and their great esteem for me, their desire of a perfect reconciliation between the two countries, and the firm and general belief in England, that no man was so capable as myself of proposing the proper means of bringing about such a reconciliation, adding that, if the old Ministers had formerly been too little attentive to my counsels, the present were very differently disposed, and he hoped that in treating with them I would totally forget their predecessors.

The time has been when such flattering language, as from great men, might have made me vainer, and had more effect on my conduct, than it can at present, when I find myself so near the end of life as to esteem lightly all personal interests and concerns, except that of maintaining to the last, and leaving behind me, the tolerably good character I have hitherto supported.

Mr. Grenville then discoursed of our resolution not to treat without our allies. This, says he, can only properly relate to France, with whom you have a treaty of alliance, but you have none with Spain, you have none with Holland. If Spain and Holland, and even if France should insist on unreasonable terms of advantage to themselves, after you have obtained all you want, and are satisfied, can it be right that America should be dragged on in a war for their interest only? He stated this matter in various lights, and pressed it earnestly. I resolved, from various reasons, to evade the discussion, therefore answered, that the intended treaty not being yet begun, it appeared unnecessary to enter at present into considerations of that kind. The preliminaries being once settled, and the treaty commenced, if any of the other Powers should make extravagant demands on England, and insist on our continuing the war till those were complied with, it would then be time enough to consider what our obligations were, and how far they extended. The first thing necessary was for him to procure the full powers, the next for us to assemble the plenipotentiaries of all the belligerent parties, and then propositions might be mutually made, received, considered, answered, or agreed to. In the mean time, I would just mention to him that,



though we were yet under no obligations to Spain by treaty, we were under obligations of gratitude for the assistance she had afforded us ; and, as Mr. Adams had some weeks since commenced a treaty in Holland, the terms of which I was not yet acquainted with, I knew not but that we might have already some alliance and obligations contracted there ; and, perhaps, we ought, however, to have some consideration for Holland on this account, that it was in vengeance for the friendly disposition shown by some of her people to make a treaty of commerce with us, that England had declared the war against her.

He said it would be hard upon England if, having given reasonable satisfaction to one or two of her enemies, she could not have peace with those till she had complied with whatever the others might demand, however unreasonable, for so she might be obliged to pay for every article four-fold. I observed, that when she made her propositions, the more advantageous they were to each the more it would be the interest of each to prevail with the others to accept those offered to them. We then spoke of the reconciliation ; but his full power not being yet come, I chose to defer entering upon that subject at present. I told him I had thoughts of putting down in writing the particulars that I judged would conduce to that end, and of adding my reasons that this required a little time, and I had been hindered by accidents, which was true, for I had begun to write, but had postponed it on account of his defective power to treat ; but I promised to finish it as soon as possible. He pressed me earnestly to do it, saying an expression of mine in a former conversation, that there still remained *roots of good will* in America towards England, which, if properly taken care of, might produce a reconciliation, had made a great impression on his mind, and given him infinite pleasure, and he hoped I would not neglect furnishing him with the information of what would be necessary to nourish these *roots*, and could assure me that my advice would be greatly regarded.

Mr. Grenville had shown me, at our last interview, a letter from the Duke of Richmond to him, requesting him to prevail with me to disengage a Captain McLeod, of the artillery, from his parole, the Duke's brother, Lord George Lenox, being appointed to the command of Portsmouth, and desiring to have him as his aid-de-camp. I had promised to consider of it, and this morning I sent him the following letter :

TO MR. GRENVILLE.

" Passy, May 31st, 1782.

" Sir,

" I do not find that I have any express authority to absolve a parole given by an English officer in America, but desirous of complying with a request of the Duke of Richmond as far as may be in my power, and being confident that the Congress will be pleased with whatever may oblige a personage they so much respect, I do hereby consent that Captain McLeod serve in his military capacity in England only till the pleasure of the Congress is known, to whom I will write immediately, and who, I make no doubt, will discharge him entirely.

" I have the honor to be, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN."

America had been constantly befriended in Parliament by the Duke of Richmond; and I believed the Congress would not be displeased that this opportunity was taken of obliging him, and that they would by their approbation supply the deficiency of my power. Besides, I could not well refuse it, after what had passed between Mr. Laurens and me, and what I had promised to do for that gentleman.

*Sunday, June 2d.* The Marquis de la Fayette called and dined with me. He is uneasy about the delay, as he cannot resolve concerning his voyage to America till some certainty appears of there being a treaty or no treaty. This day I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams:

TO JOHN ADAMS.

" Passy, June 2d, 1782.

" Sir,

" Since mine of May 8th, I have not had any thing material to communicate to your Excellency. Mr. Grenville indeed arrived just after I had despatched that letter, and I introduced him to M. de Vergennes, but, as his mission seemed only a repetition of that by Mr. Oswald, the same declaration of the King of England's sincere desire of peace, and willingness to treat at Paris, which were answered by the same declarations of the good dispositions of this Court, and that it could not treat without the concurrence of its

allies, I omitted writing till something should be produced from a kind of agreement, that M. de Vergennes would acquaint Spain and Holland with the overture, and Mr. Grenville would write for full powers to treat, and make propositions ; nothing of importance being in the mean time to be transacted.

“ Mr. Grenville accordingly despatched a messenger for London, who returned in about twelve days. Mr. Grenville called on me, after having been at Versailles, and acquainted me that he had received the power, and had left a copy of it with M. de Vergennes, and that he was therefore authorised to treat with France and her *allies*. The next time I went to Versailles, I desired to see that copy, and was surprised to find in it no mention of the allies of France, or any one of them ; and, on speaking with M. de Vergennes about it, I found he began to look upon the whole as a piece of artifice to amuse us, and gain time ; since he had uniformly declared to every agent who had appeared there, viz : to Forth, Oswald, and Grenville, that the King would not treat without the concurrence of his allies, and yet England had given a power to treat with France only, which showed she did not intend to treat at all, but meant to continue the war.

“ I had not till yesterday an opportunity of talking with Mr. Grenville on the subject ; and expressing my wonder, that after what he told me there should be no mention made of our States in his commission, he could not explain this to my satisfaction, but said he believed the omission was occasioned by their copying an old commission given to Mr. Stanley at the last treaty of peace, for he was sure the intention was, that he should treat with us, his instructions being fully to that purpose. I acquainted him that I thought a special commission was necessary, without which we could not treat with him. I imagine, that there is a reluctance in their King to take this first step, as the giving such a commission would itself be a kind of acknowledgment of our independence. Their late success against Count de Grasse may also have given them hopes, that by delay and more successes they may make that acknowledgment and a peace less necessary.

“ Mr. Grenville has written to his Court for further instructions. We shall see what the return of his courier will produce. If full power to treat with each of the Powers at war against England does not appear, I imagine the negociation will be broken off. Mr. Grenville,

in his conversation with me, insists much on our being under no engagements not to make a peace without Holland. I have answered him, that I know not but that you may have entered into some, and if there should be none, a general pacification, made at the same time, would be best for us all, and that I believe neither Holland nor we could be prevailed on to abandon our friends. What happens further shall be immediately communicated.

“ Be pleased to present my respects to Mr. Laurens, to whom I wrote some days since. Mr. Jay, I suppose, is on his way hither.

“ With great respect, &c.,

“ B. FRANKLIN.”

On Monday the 3d, Mr. Oswald came according to appointment. He told me he had seen and had conversations with Lord Shelburne, Lord Rockingham, and Mr. Fox. That their desire of peace continued uniformly the same, though he thought some of them were a little too much elated with the late victory in the West Indies, and when observing his coolness, they asked him if he did not think it a very good thing, yes, said he, if you do not rate it too high. He went on with the utmost frankness to tell me, that the peace was absolutely necessary for them. That the nation had been foolishly involved in four wars, and could no longer raise money to carry them on, so that if they continued, it would be absolutely necessary for them to stop payment of the interest money on the funds, which would ruin their future credit. He spoke of stopping on all sums above £1,000, and continuing to pay on those below, because the great sums belonged to the rich, who could better bear the delay of their interest, and the smaller sums to poorer persons, who would be more hurt, and make more clamor, and that the rich might be quieted by promising them interest upon their interest. All this looked as if the matter had been seriously thought on.

Mr. Oswald has an air of great simplicity and honesty, yet I could hardly take this to be merely a weak confession of their deplorable state, and thought it might be rather intended as a kind of intimidation, by showing us that they had still that resource in their power, which he said would furnish five millions a year. But, he added, our enemies may now do what they please with us; *they have the ball at their foot*, was his expression, and we hope they will show their moderation and magnanimity. He then repeatedly mentioned the great esteem the Ministers had for me; that they, with

all the considerate people of England, looked to, and depended on me for the means of extricating the nation from its present desperate situation ; and that, perhaps, no single man had ever in his hands an opportunity of doing so much good as I had at this present time ; with much more to that purpose. He then showed me a letter to him from Lord Shelburne, partly, I suppose, that I might see his lordship's opinion of me, which, as it has some relation to the negociation, is here inserted. He left it with me, requesting that I would communicate it to Mr. Walpole.

## LORD SHELBURNE TO RICHARD OSWALD.

“Whitehall, May 21st, 1782.

“Sir,

“It has reached me, that Mr. Walpole esteems himself much injured by your going to Paris, and that he conceives it was a measure of mine, intended to take the present negociation with the Court of France out of his hands, which he conceives to have been previously commenced through his channel, by Mr. Fox. I must desire that you will have the goodness to call upon Mr. Walpole, and explain to him distinctly, how very little foundation there is for so unjust a suspicion, as I knew of no such intercourse. Mr. Fox declares, he considered what had passed between him and Mr. Walpole of a mere private nature, not sufficiently material to mention to the King or the Cabinet, and will write to Mr. Walpole to explain this distinctly to him.

“But if you find the least suspicion of this kind has reached Dr. Franklin, or the Count de Vergennes, I desire this matter may be clearly explained to both. I have too much friendship for Dr. Franklin, and too much respect for the character of the Count de Vergennes, with which I am perfectly acquainted, to be so indifferent to the good opinion of either as to suffer them to believe me capable of an intrigue, where I have both professed and observed a direct opposite course of conduct. In truth, I hold it in such perfect contempt, that, however proud I may be to serve the King in my present situation, or in any other, and however anxious I may be to serve my country, I should not hesitate a moment about retiring from any situation which required such services. But I must do the King justice to say, that his Majesty abhors them, and

I need not tell you that it is my fixed principle, that no country in any moment can be advantaged by them.

“I am, with great truth and regard, &c.,      SHELBURNE.”

In speaking further of the Ministry's opinion of the great service it might be in my power to render, Mr. Oswald said he had told them in one of his conversations, that nothing was to be expected of me but consistency, nothing unsuitable to my character, or inconsistent with my duty to my country. I did not ask him the particular occasion of his saying this, but thought it looked a little as if something inconsistent with my duty had been talked of or proposed. Mr. Oswald also gave me a copy of a paper of memorandums, written by Lord Shelburne, viz :

“1. That I am ready to correspond more particularly with Dr. Franklin, if wished.

“2. That the *Enabling Act* is passing, with the insertion of Commissioners recommended by Mr. Oswald ; and, on our part Commissioners will be named, or any character given to Mr. Oswald, which Dr. Franklin and he may judge conducive to a final settlement of things between Great Britain and America ; which Dr. Franklin very properly says requires to be treated in a very different manner from the peace between Great Britain and France, who have always been at enmity with each other.

“3. That an establishment for the Loyalists must always be on Mr. Oswald's mind, as it is uppermost in Lord Shelburne's, besides other steps in their favor to influence the several States to agree to a fair restoration or compensation for whatever confiscations have taken place.

“4. To give Lord Shelburne's letter about Mr. Walpole to Dr. Franklin.”

On perusing this paper, I recollected that a bill had been some time since proposed in Parliament, *to enable his Majesty to conclude a peace or truce with the revolted Provinces in America*, which I supposed to be the Enabling Bill mentioned, that had hitherto slept, and not having been passed, was perhaps the true reason why the Colonies were not mentioned in Mr. Grenville's commission. Mr. Oswald thought it likely, and said that the words, “Insertion of Commissioners, recommended by Mr. Oswald,” related to his advising an express mention in the bill of the Commissioners appointed by

Congress to treat of peace, instead of the vague denomination of *any person or persons, &c.*, in the first draft of the bill.

As to the Loyalists, I repeated what I had said to him when first here, that their estates had been confiscated by the laws made in particular States where the delinquents had resided, and not by any law of Congress, who, indeed, had no power, either to make such laws or to repeal them, or to dispense with them, and, therefore, could give no power to their Commissioners to treat of a restoration for those people; that it was an affair appertaining to each State. That if there were justice in compensating them, it must be due from England rather than America; but, in my opinion, England was not under any very great obligations to them, since it was by their misrepresentations and bad counsels she had been drawn into this miserable war. And that if an account was to be brought against us for their losses, we should more than balance it by an account of the ravages they had committed all along the coasts of America.

Mr. Oswald agreed to the reasonableness of all this, and said he had, before he came away, told the Ministers that he thought no recompense to those people was to be expected from us; that he had also, in consequence of our former conversation on that subject, given it as his opinion that Canada should be given up to the United States, as it would prevent the occasions of future difference; and as the government of such a country was worth nothing, and of no importance, if they could have there a free commerce; that the Marquis of Rockingham and Lord Shelburne, though they spoke reservedly, did not seem very averse to it, but that Mr. Fox appeared to be startled at the proposition. He was, however, not without hopes that it would be agreed to.

We now came to another article of the note, viz: "On our part Commissioners will be named, or any character given to Mr. Oswald which Dr. Franklin and he may judge conducive to a final settlement of things between Great Britain and America."

This he said was left entirely to me, for he had no will in the affair; he did not desire to be further concerned than to see it *in train*; he had no personal views either of honor or profit. He had now seen and conversed with Mr. Grenville, thought him a very sensible young gentleman, and very capable of the business; he did not, therefore, see any further occasion there was for himself; but if I thought otherwise, and conceived he might be further useful, he was

content to give his time and service in any character or manner I should think proper. I said, his knowledge of America, where he had lived, and with every part of which, and of its commerce and circumstances he was well acquainted, made me think, that in persuading the Ministry to things reasonable relating to that country, he could speak or write with more weight than Mr. Grenville, and, therefore, I wished him to continue in the service; and I asked him whether he would like to be joined in a general commission for treating with all the Powers at war with England, or to have a special commission to himself for treating with America only. He said he did not choose to be concerned in treaty with the foreign Powers, for he was not sufficiently a master of their affairs, or of the French language, which, probably, would be used in treating; if, therefore, he accepted of any commission, it should be that of treating with America. I told him I would write to Lord Shelburne on the subject; but Mr. Grenville having some time since despatched a courier, partly on account of the commission, who was not yet returned, I thought it well to wait a few days, till we could see what answer he would bring, or what measures were taken. This he approved of.

The truth is, he appears so good and so reasonable a man, that, though I have no objection to Mr. Grenville, I should be loth to lose Mr. Oswald. He seems to have nothing at heart but the good of mankind, and putting a stop to mischief; the other, a young statesman, may be supposed to have naturally a little ambition of recommending himself as an able negociator.

In the afternoon, M. Boeris, of Holland, called on me, and acquainted me that the answer had not yet been given to the last memorial from Russia, relating to the mediation; but it was thought it would be in respectful terms, to thank her Imperial Majesty for her kind offers, and to represent the propriety of their connexion with France in endeavors to obtain a general peace, and that they conceived it would be still more glorious for her Majesty to employ her influence in procuring a general, than a particular pacification. M. Boeris further informed me, that they were not well satisfied in Holland with the conduct of the Russian Court, and suspected views of continuing the war for particular purposes.

*Tuesday, June 4th.* I have received another packet from Mr.



Hartley. It consisted of duplicates of former letters and papers already inserted, and contained nothing new but the following letter from Colonel Hartley, his brother :

W. H. HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

“Soho Square, May 24th, 1782.

“Dear Sir,

“It is with the greatest pleasure I take my pen to acknowledge your remembrance of me in yours to my brother, and to thank you for those expressions of regard which I can assure you are mutual. My brother has desired me to copy some letters and papers, by way of sending you duplicates. I am particularly happy at the employment, because the greatest object of my parliamentary life has been to coöperate with him in his endeavors to put a period to this destructive war, and forward the blessed work of peace. I hope to see him again in that situation, where he can so well serve his country with credit to himself; and while I have the honor of being in Parliament, my attention will be continued to promote the effects which will naturally flow from those principles of freedom and universal philanthropy you have both so much supported. While I copy his words, my own feelings and judgment are truly in unison, and I have but to add the most ardent wish, that peace and happiness may crown the honest endeavors towards so desirable an end.

“I am, dear sir, with the greatest respect and esteem, yours sincerely,

“W. H. HARTLEY.”

*Wednesday, June 5th.* Mr. Oswald called again to acquaint me, that Lord Cornwallis, being very anxious to be discharged from his parole as soon as possible, had sent a Major Ross hither to solicit it, supposing Mr. Laurens might be here with me. Mr. Oswald told me, what I had not heard before, that Mr. Laurens, while prisoner in the Tower, had proposed obtaining the discharge of Lord Cornwallis in exchange for himself, and had promised to use his utmost endeavors to that purpose, in case he was set at liberty, not doubting of the success. I communicated to Mr. Oswald what had already passed between Mr. Laurens and me respecting Lord Cornwallis, which appears in the preceding letters, and told him I should have made less difficulty about the discharge of his parole if

Mr. Laurens had informed me of his being set at liberty in consequence of such an offer and promise, and I wished him to state this in a letter to me, that it might appear for my justification in what I might, with Mr. Laurens, do in the affair; and that he would procure for me from Major Ross a copy of the parole, that I might be better acquainted with the nature of it. He accordingly in the afternoon sent me the following letter:

[See this letter above, p. 262. Also the answer, p. 263.]

*Friday, June 7th.* Major Ross called upon me to thank me for the favorable intentions I had expressed in my letter to Mr. Oswald respecting Lord Cornwallis, and to assure me that his lordship would forever remember it with gratitude, &c. I told him it was our duty to alleviate, as much as we could, the calamities of war; that I expected letters from Mr. Laurens relating to the affair, after the receipt of which I would immediately complete it. Or, if I did not hear from Mr. Laurens, I would speak to the Marquis de la Fayette, get his approbation, and finish it without further delay.

*Saturday, June 8th.* I received some newspapers from England, in one of which is the following paragraph:

*From the London Evening Post of May 30th, 1782.*

“If report on the spot speak truth, Mr. Grenville, in his first visit to Dr. Franklin, gained a considerable point of information, as to the powers America had retained for treating *separately* with Great Britain, in case her claims, or demands, were granted.

“The treaty of February 6th, 1778, was made the basis of this conversation; and by the spirit and meaning of this treaty there is no obligation on America not to treat *separately* for peace, after she is assured England will grant her independence and a free commerce with all the world.

“The first article of that treaty engages America and France to be bound to each other, as long as *circumstances* may require; therefore the granting America all she asks of England is breaking the bond by which the *circumstances* may bind America to France.

“The second article says, the meaning and direct end of the alliance is to insure the freedom and independence of America. Surely, then, when freedom and independence are allowed by Britain,

America may, or may not, as she chooses, put an end to the present war between England and America, and leave France to war on through all her mad projects of reducing the power and greatness of England, while America feels herself possessed of what she wishes.

“By the 8th article of the treaty, neither France nor America can conclude peace without the assent of the other, and they engage not to lay down their arms until the independence of America is acknowledged; but this article does not exclude America from entering into a separate treaty for peace with England, and evinces more strongly than the former articles, that America may enter into a separate treaty with England, when she is convinced that England has insured to her *all that she can reasonably ask.*”

I conjecture that this must be an extract from a letter of Mr. Grenville's; but it carries an appearance as if he and I had agreed in these imaginary discourses of America's being at liberty to make peace without France, and whereas my whole discourse, in the strongest terms, declared our determinations to the contrary, and the impossibility of our acting, not only contrary to the treaty, but the duties of gratitude and honor, of which nothing is mentioned. This young negociator seems to value himself on having obtained from me a copy of the treaty. I gave it him freely, at his request, it being not so much a secret as he imagined, having been printed—first in all the American papers soon after it was made; then at London in Almon's Remembrancer, which I wonder he did not know; and afterwards in a collection of the American Constitutions, published by order of Congress. As such imperfect accounts of our conversations find their way into the English papers, I must speak to this gentleman of its impropriety.

*Sunday, June 9th.* Doctor Bancroft, being intimately acquainted with Mr. Walpole, I this day gave him Lord Shelburne's letter to Mr. Oswald, requesting he would communicate it to that gentleman. Doctor Bancroft said it was believed both Russia and the Emperor wish the continuance of the war, and aimed at procuring for England a peace with Holland, that England might be better able to continue it against France and Spain.

The Marquis de la Fayette having proposed to call on me to-day, I kept back the discharge of Lord Cornwallis, which was written and ready, desiring to have his approbation of it, as he had in a

former conversation advised it. He did not come, but late in the evening sent me a note, acquainting me that he had been prevented by accompanying the Great Duke to the review, but would breakfast with me to-morrow morning.

This day I received a letter from Mr. Dana, dated at St. Petersburg, April 29th, in which is the following passage: "We yesterday received the news, that the States General had, on the 19th of this month (N. S.) acknowledged the independence of the United States. This event gave a shock here, and is not well received, as they at least profess to have flattered themselves, that the mediation would have prevented it, and otherwise brought on a partial peace between Britain and Holland. This resentment, I believe, will not be productive of any ill consequences to the Dutch Republic." It is true, that while the war continues, Russia feels a greater demand for the naval stores, and perhaps at a higher price. But is it possible, that for such petty interests mankind can wish to see their neighbors destroy each other? Or has the project lately talked of some foundation, that Russia and the Emperor intend driving the Turks out of Europe; and do they therefore wish to see France and England so weakened as to be unable to assist those people?

*Monday, June 12th.* The Marquis de la Fayette did not come till between eleven and twelve. He brought with him Major Ross. After breakfast, he told me (Major Ross being gone into another room) that he had seen Mr. Grenville lately, who asked him when he should go to America. That he had answered, I have stayed here longer than I should otherwise have done, that I might see whether we were to have peace or war; but as I see that the expectation of peace is a joke, and that you only amuse us without any real intention of treating, I think to stay no longer, but set out in a few days. On which Mr. Grenville assured him that it was no joke, that they were very sincere in their proposal of treating, and four or five days would convince the Marquis of it.

The Marquis then spoke to me about a request of Major Ross's in behalf of himself, Lord Chewton, a Lieutenant Colonel, and Lieutenant Haldane, who were aids-de-camp to Lord Cornwallis, that they, too, might be set at liberty with him. I told the Marquis that he was better acquainted with the custom in such cases than I; and

being himself one of the Generals to whom their parole had been given, he had more right to discharge it than I had, and that if he judged it a thing proper to be done, I wished him to do it. He went into the bureau, saying he would write something, which he accordingly did; but it was not, as I expected, a discharge that he was to sign, it was for me to sign; and the Major, not liking that which I had drawn for Lord Cornwallis, because there was a clause in it reserving to Congress the approbation or disallowance of my act, went away without taking it. Upon which I the next morning wrote the following to Mr. Oswald:

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

“ Passy, June 11th, 1782.

“ Sir,

“ I did intend to have waited on you this morning to inquire after your health, and deliver the enclosed paper relating to the parole of Lord Cornwallis, but being obliged to go to Versailles, I must postpone my visit till to-morrow.

“ I do not conceive that I have any authority, in virtue of my office here, to absolve that parole in any degree; I have, therefore, endeavored to found it as well as I could on the express power given me by Congress to exchange General Burgoyne for Mr. Laurens. A reservation is made of confirmation or disapprobation by Congress, not from any desire to restrain the entire liberty of that General, but because I think it decent and my duty to make such reservation, and that I might otherwise be blamed as assuming a power not given me, if I undertook to discharge absolutely a parole given to Congress, without any authority from them for so doing.

“ With great esteem and respect, &c., B. FRANKLIN.”

I have received no answer from Mr. Laurens. The following is the paper mentioned in the above letter:

*The Discharge of Lord Cornwallis from his Parole.*

“ The Congress having, by a resolution of the 14th of June last, empowered me to offer an exchange of General Burgoyne for the Honorable Henry Laurens, then a prisoner in the Tower of London, and whose liberty they much desire to obtain, which exchange, though proposed by me, according to the said resolution, had not

been accepted or executed, when advice was received, that General Burgoyne was exchanged in virtue of another agreement. And Mr. Laurens thereupon having proposed another Lieutenant General, viz, Lord Cornwallis, as an exchange for himself, promising, that if set at liberty he would do his utmost to obtain a confirmation of that proposal; and Mr. Laurens being soon after discharged, and having since urged me earnestly, in several letters, to join with him in absolving the parole of that General, which appears to be a thing just and equitable in itself; and for the honor therefore of our country I do hereby, as far as in my power lies, in virtue of the above resolution, or otherwise, absolve and discharge the parole of Lord Cornwallis, given by him in Virginia, setting him at entire liberty to act in his civil or military capacity, until the pleasure of Congress shall be known, to whom is reserved the confirmation or disapprobation of this discharge, in case they have made or shall intend to make a different disposition.

“Given at Passy this 9th day of June, 1782.

“B. FRANKLIN,  
“*Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States  
of America to the Court of France.*”

I did not well comprehend the Major's conduct in refusing this paper. He was come express from London, to solicit a discharge of Lord Cornwallis's parole. He had said that his lordship was very anxious to obtain that discharge, being unhappy in his present situation. One of his objections to it was, that his lordship with such a limited discharge of his parole could not enter into foreign service. He declared it was not his lordship's intention to return to America. Yet he would not accept the paper, unless the reservation was omitted. I did not choose to make the alteration, and so he left it, not well pleased with me.

This day, *Tuesday, June 11th*, I was at Versailles, and had a good deal of conversation with M. de Rayneval, Secretary to the Council. I showed him the letters I had received by Mr. Oswald from Lord Shelburne, and related all the consequent conversation I had had with Mr. Grenville. We concluded that the reason of his couriers not being returned, might be the formalities occasioning delay in passing the Enabling Bill. I went down with him to

the cabinet of Count de Vergennes, where all was repeated and explained. That Minister seemed now to be almost persuaded that the English Court was sincere in its declarations of being desirous of peace. We spoke of all its attempts to separate us, and of the prudence of our holding together and treating in concert. I made one remark, that as they had shown so strong a desire of disuniting us, by large offers to each particular Power, plainly in the view of dealing more advantageously with the rest, and had reluctantly agreed to make a general treaty, it was possible, that after making a peace with all, they might pick out one of us to make war with separately. Against which project I thought it would not be amiss, if, before the treaties of peace were signed, we who were at war against England should enter into another treaty, engaging ourselves, that in such a case we should again make it a common cause, and renew the general war; which he seemed to approve of. He read Lord Shelburne's letter relating to Mr. Walpole, said that gentleman had attempted to open a negociation through the Marquis de Castries, who had told him he was come to the wrong house, and should go to Count de Vergennes; but he never had appeared; that he was an intriguer, knew many people about the Court, and was accustomed to manage his affairs by hidden and roundabout ways; but, said he, "when people have any thing to propose that relates to my employment, I think they should come directly to me; my cabinet is the place where such affairs are to be treated." On the whole he seemed rather pleased that Mr. Walpole had not come to him, appearing not to like him.

I learnt that Mr. Jay had taken leave, on the 7th past, of the Spanish Ministers, in order to come hither, so that he may be daily expected; but I hear nothing of Mr. Laurens or Mr. Adams.

*Wednesday, June 12th.* I visited Mr. Oswald this morning. He said he had received the paper I had sent him, relating to the parole of Lord Cornwallis, and had, by conversing with Major Ross, convinced him of his error in refusing it; that he saw I had done every thing that could be fairly desired of me, and said every thing in the paper that could give a weight to the temporary discharge, and tend to prevail with the Congress to confirm and complete it. Major Ross coming in, made an apology for not having accepted it at first, declared his perfect satisfaction with it, and said he was sure

Lord Cornwallis would be very sensible of the favor. He then mentioned the custom among military people, that in discharging the parole of a general, that of his aids was discharged at the same time. I answered, I was a stranger to the customs of the army; that I had made the most of the authority I had for exchanging General Burgoyne, by extending it as a foundation for the exchange of Lord Cornwallis, but that I had no shadow of authority for going further; that the Marquis de la Fayette having been present when the parole was given, and one of the Generals who received it, was, I thought, more competent to the discharge of it than myself; and I could do nothing in it. He went then to the Marquis, who, in the afternoon, sent me the drafts of a limited discharge, which he should sign, but requested my approbation of it, of which I made no difficulty, though I observed he had put into it that it was by my advice. He appears very prudently cautious of doing any thing that may seem assuming a power that he is not vested with.

*Friday, the 14th.* M. Boeris called again, wishing to know if Mr. Grenville's courier was returned, and whether the treaty was like to go on. I could give him no information. He told me it was intended in Holland, in answer to the last Russian Memorial, to say, that they could not now enter into a particular treaty with England, that they thought it more glorious for her Imperial Majesty to be the mediatrix in a general treaty, and wished her to name the place. I said to him, as you tell me their High Mightinesses are not well satisfied with Russia, and had rather avoid her mediation, would it not be better to omit the proposition, at least of her naming the place, especially as France, England, and America have already agreed to treat at Paris? He replied, it might be better, but, says he, we have no politicians among us. I advised him to write and get that omitted, as I understood it would be a week before the answer was concluded on. He did not seem to think his writing would be of much importance. I have observed, that his colleague, M. Vanderpierre, has a greater opinion by far of his own influence and consequence.

*Saturday, June 15th.* Mr. Oswald came out to breakfast with me. We afterwards took a walk in the garden, when he told me that Mr. Grenville's courier returned last night. That he had



received by him a letter from Mrs. Oswald, but not a line from the Ministry, nor had he heard a word from them since his arrival, nor had he heard of any news brought by the courier. That he should have gone to see Mr. Grenville this morning, but he had omitted it, that gentleman being subject to morning headaches, which prevented his rising so early. I said I supposed he would go to Versailles, and call on me in his return. We had but little further discourse, having no new subject.

Mr. Oswald left me about noon, and soon after Mr. Grenville came, and acquainted me with the return of his courier, and that he had brought the full powers. That he, Mr. Grenville, had been at Versailles, and left a copy with Count de Vergennes. That the instrument was in the same terms with the former, except that after the power to treat with the King of France, or his Ministers, there was an addition of words, importing a power to treat with the Ministers of any other Prince or *State* whom it might concern. That Count de Vergennes had at first objected to these general words, as not being particular enough, but said he would lay it before the King, and communicate it to the Ministers of the belligerent Powers, and that Mr. Grenville should hear from him on Monday. Mr. Grenville added, that he had further informed Count de Vergennes of his being now instructed to make a proposition as a basis for the intended treaty, viz: the peace of 1763. That the proposition intended to be made under his first powers, not being then received, was now changed, and instead of proposing to allow the independence of America, on condition of England's being put into the situation she was in at the peace of 1763, he was now authorised to *declare the independence of America previous to the treaty*, as a voluntary act, and to propose separately as a basis the treaty of 1763. This also Count de Vergennes undertook to lay before the King, and communicate to me.

Mr. Grenville then said to me, he hoped all difficulties were now removed, and that we might proceed in the good work. I asked him if the Enabling Bill was passed? He said, no. It passed the Commons, and had been once read in the House of Lords, but was not yet completed. I remarked, that the usual time approached for the prorogation of Parliament, and possibly this business might be omitted. He said there was no danger of that; the Parliament would not rise this year till the middle of July; the India affairs had put

back other business which must be done, and would require a prolongation of the session till that time. I then observed to him, that, though we Americans considered ourselves as a distinct independent Power, or State, yet, as the British Government had always hitherto affected to consider us only as rebellious subjects, and as the Enabling Act was not yet passed, I did not think it could be fairly supposed that his Court intended, by the general words, *any other Prince or State*, to include a people whom they did not allow to be a State; and that, therefore, I doubted the sufficiency of his power as to treating with America, though it might be good as to Spain and Holland. He replied, that he himself had no doubt of the sufficiency of his power, and was willing to act upon it. I then desired to have a copy of the power, which he accordingly promised me.

He would have entered into conversation on the topic of reconciliation, but I chose still to waive it, till I should find the negotiation more certainly commenced; and I showed him the London paper containing the article above transcribed, that he might see how our conversations were misrepresented, and how hazardous it must be for me to make any propositions of the kind at present. He seemed to treat the newspapers lightly, as of no consequence, but I observed that before he had finished the reading of the article, he turned to the beginning of the paper to see the date, which made me suspect that he doubted whether it might not have taken its rise from some of his letters.

When he left me, I went to dine with M. de Chaumont, who had invited me to meet there Mr. Walpole, at his request. We shook hands, and he observed that it was near two years since we had seen each other. Then, stepping aside, he thanked me for having communicated to him Lord Shelburne's letter to Mr. Oswald; thought it odd that Mr. Oswald himself had not spoken to him about it; said he had received a letter from Mr. Fox upon the affair of St. Eustatia in which there were some general words expressing a desire of peace; that he had mentioned this to the Marquis de Castries, who had referred him to Count de Vergennes, but he did not think it a sufficient authority for him to go to that Minister. It was known that he had business with the Minister of the Marine on the other affair, and, therefore, his going to him was not taken notice of; but if he had gone to Count de Vergennes, Minister of Foreign Affairs,

it would have occasioned speculation, and much discourse ; that he had, therefore, avoided it till he should be authorised, and had written accordingly to Mr. Fox ; but that in the mean time, Mr. Oswald had been chosen upon the supposition that he, Mr. Walpole, and I, were at variance. He spoke of Mr. Oswald as an odd kind of man, but that, indeed, his nation were generally odd people, &c. We dined pleasantly together with the family, and parted agreeably, without entering into any particulars of the business. Count d'Estaing was at this dinner, and I met him again in the evening, at Madame Brillon's. There is at present among the people much censure of Count de Grasse's conduct, and a general wish that Count d'Estaing had the command in America. I avoid meddling or even speaking on the subject, as improper for me, though I much esteem that commander.

*Sunday, the 16th.* I heard nothing from Versailles. I received a letter from Mr. Adams, acquainting me he had drawn upon me for a quarter's salary, which he hoped would be the last, as he now found himself in the way of getting some money there, though not much. But he says not a word in answer to my late letters on public affairs, nor have I any line from Mr. Laurens, which I wonder at. I received also a letter from Mr. Carmichael, dated June 5th, at Madrid. He speaks of Mr. Jay being on his journey, and supposes he would be with me before that letter, so that I may expect him daily. We have taken lodgings for him in Paris.

*Monday, the 17th.* I received a letter from Mr. Hodgson, acquainting me that the American prisoners at Portsmouth, to the number of three hundred, were all embarked on board the transports ; that each had received twenty shillings' worth of necessaries at the expense of the Government, and went on board in good humor ; that contrary winds had prevented the transports arriving in time at Plymouth, but that the whole number there now of our people, amounting to seven hundred, with those arrived from Ireland, would soon be on their way home.

In the evening the Marquis de la Fayette came to see me, and said he had seen Count de Vergennes, who was satisfied with Mr. Grenville's powers. He asked me what I thought of them, and I told him what I had said to Mr. Grenville of their imperfection with

respect to us. He agreed in opinion with me. I let him know that I proposed waiting on Count de Vergennes to-morrow.

He said he had signed the paper relating to Major Ross's parole, and hoped Congress would not take it amiss, and added, that in conversation with the Major, he had asked him why England was so backward to make propositions? We are afraid, says the Major, of offering you more than you expect or desire. I find myself in some perplexity with regard to these two negociators. Mr. Oswald appears to have been the choice of Lord Shelburne, Mr. Grenville that of Mr. Secretary Fox. Lord Shelburne is said to have lately acquired much of the King's confidence. Mr. Fox calls himself the Minister of the people, and it is certain that his popularity is lately much increased. Lord Shelburne seems to wish to have the management of the treaty, Mr. Fox seems to think in his department. I hear that the understanding between these Ministers is not quite perfect. Mr. Grenville is clever, and seems to feel reason as readily as Mr. Oswald, though not so ready to own it. Mr. Oswald appears quite plain and sincere; I sometimes a little doubt Mr. Grenville. Mr. Oswald, an old man, seems to have no desire but that of being useful in doing good. Mr. Grenville, a young man, naturally desirous of acquiring reputation, seems to aim at that of being an able negociator. Mr. Oswald does not solicit to have any share in the business, but, submitting the matter to Lord Shelburne and me, expresses only his willingness to serve if we think he may be useful, and is equally willing to be excused, if we judge there is no occasion for him. Mr. Grenville seems to think the whole negotiation committed to him, and to have no idea of Mr. Oswald's being concerned in it, and is, therefore, willing to extend the expressions in his commission, so as to make them comprehend America, and this beyond what I think they will bear. I imagine we might, however, go on very well with either of them, though I rather should prefer Oswald, but I apprehend difficulties if they are both employed, especially if there is any misunderstanding between their principals. I must, however, write to Lord Shelburne, proposing something in consequence of his offer of vesting Mr. Oswald with any commission, which that gentleman and I should think proper.

*Tuesday, the 18th.* I found myself much indisposed with a

sudden and violent cold, attended with a feverishness and headache. I imagined it to be an effect of the influenza, a disorder now reigning in various parts of Europe. This prevented my going to Versailles.

*Thursday, the 20th.* Weather excessively hot, and my disorder continues, but is lessened, the headache having left me. I am, however, not yet able to go to Versailles.

*Friday, the 21st.* I received the following note from the Marquis de la Fayette :

M. DE LA FAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.

“Versailles, Thursday morning, June 20th, 1788.

“My dear Sir,

“Agreeably to your desire, I have waited upon the Count de Vergennes, and said to him what I had in command from your Excellency. He intends taking the King’s orders this morning, and expects he will be able to propose to Mr. Grenville a meeting for to-morrow, when he will have time to explain himself respecting France and her allies, that he may make an official communication both to the King and the allied Ministers. What Count de Vergennes can make out of this conversation will be communicated by him to your Excellency, in case you are able to come. In the other case I shall wait upon you to-morrow evening with every information I can collect.

“I have the honor to be, very respectfully, &c.,

“LA FAYETTE.”

In the evening the Marquis called upon me, and acquainted me that Mr. Grenville had been with Count de Vergennes, but could not inform me what had passed.

*Saturday, the 22d.* Messrs. Oswald and Whiteford came and breakfasted with me. Mr. Oswald had received no letters of instructions. I told him I would write to Lord Shelburne respecting him, and call on him on Monday morning to breakfast, and show him what I proposed to write, that it might receive such alterations as he should judge proper.

*Sunday, the 23d.* In the afternoon Mr. Jay arrived, to my great satisfaction. I proposed going with him the next morning to Versailles, and presenting him to M. de Vergennes. He informed me,

that the Spanish Ministers had been much struck with the news from England, respecting the resolutions of Parliament to discontinue the war in America, &c., and that they had since been extremely civil to him, and he understood intended to send instructions to their Ambassador at this Court, to make the long talked of treaty with him here. \*

*Monday, the 24th.* Wrote a note of excuse to Mr. Oswald, promising to see him on Wednesday, and went with Mr. Jay to Versailles. Count de Vergennes acquainted us that he had given to Mr. Grenville the answer to his propositions, who had immediately despatched it to his Court. He read it to us, and I shall endeavor to obtain a copy of it. Count de Vergennes informing us that a frigate was about to be despatched for America, by which he might write, and that the courier who was to carry down the despatches would set out on Wednesday morning, we concluded to omit coming to Court on Tuesday, in order to prepare our letters. Count de Vergennes appeared to have some doubts about the sincerity of the British Court, and the *bon foi* of Mr. Grenville, but said the return of Mr. Grenville's courier might give light. I wrote the following letters to Mr. Secretary Livingston, and Mr. Morris.\*

*Wednesday, the 26th.* I sent away my letters, and went to see Mr. Oswald. I showed him the draft of a letter to be addressed to him instead of Lord Shelburne, respecting the commission, or public character he might hereafter be vested with; this draft was founded on Lord Shelburne's memorandums, which Mr. Oswald had shown to me, and this letter was intended to be communicated by him to Lord Shelburne. Mr. Oswald liked the mode, but rather chose that no mention should be made of his having shown me Lord Shelburne's memorandums, though he thought they were given to him for that purpose. So I struck that part out, and new-modelled the letter, which I sent him the next day, as follows:

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

“ Passy, June 27th, 1782.

“ Sir,

“ The opinion I have of your candor, probity, and good under-

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\* See the letter to Mr. Livingston, p. 267; the letter to Mr. Morris is missing.

standing, and good will to both countries, made me hope you would have been vested with the character of Plenipotentiary to treat with those from America. When Mr. Grenville produced his first commission, which was only to treat with France, I did imagine that the other to treat with us was reserved for you, and kept only till the *Enabling* Bill should be passed. Mr. Grenville has since received a second commission, which, as he informs me, has additional words, empowering him to treat with the Ministers of any other *Prince or State* whom it may concern, and he seems to understand that those general words comprehend the United States of America. There may be no doubt that they may comprehend Spain and Holland, but as there exist various public acts by which the Government of Britain denies us to be States, and none in which they acknowledge us to be such, it seems hardly clear that we could be intended at the time the commission was given, the *Enabling Act* not being then passed. So that though I can have no objection to Mr. Grenville, nor right to make it if I had any, yet as your long residence in America has given you a knowledge of that country, its people, circumstances, commerce, &c., which, added to your experience in business, may be useful to both sides in facilitating and expediting the negotiation, I cannot but hope that it is still intended to vest you with the character above mentioned, respecting the treaty with America, either separately or in conjunction with Mr. Grenville, as to the wisdom of your Ministry may seem best. Be it as it may, I beg you would accept this line as a testimony of the sincere esteem and respect with which, &c.,

“ B. FRANKLIN.”

*Friday, June 28th.* M. de Rayneval called upon me, and acquainted me that the Ministers had received intelligence from England, that besides the orders given to General Carleton to propose terms of reunion to America, artful emissaries were sent over to go through the country and stir up the people to call on the Congress to accept those terms, they being similar to those settling with Ireland; that it would, therefore, be well for Mr. Jay and me to write and caution Congress against these practices. He said Count de Vergennes wished also to know what I had written respecting the negotiation, as it would be well for us to hold pretty near the same language. I told him that I did not apprehend the least danger that such emissaries would meet with any success, or

that the Congress would make any treaty with General Carleton. That I would, however, write as he desired; and Mr. Jay coming in, promised the same. He said the courier would go to-morrow. I accordingly wrote the following letter to Mr. Secretary Livingston.\*

M. de Rayneval, who is Secretary of the Council of State, called again in the evening. I gave him copies of the three preceding letters to peruse and show to Count de Vergennes, to convince him that we held no underhand dealings here. I own I had, at the same time, another view in it, which was, that they should see I had been ordered to demand further aids, and had forbore to make the demands, with my reasons, hoping that if they could possibly help us to more money, they might be induced to do it.

I had never made any visit to Count d'Aranda, the Spanish Ambassador, for reasons before mentioned. M. de Rayneval told Mr. Jay and me this morning, that it would be well for us to wait on him, and he had authority to assure us we should be well received. We accordingly concluded to wait on his Excellency the next morning.

*Saturday, June 29th.* We went together to the Spanish Ambassador's, who received us with great civility and politeness. He spoke with Mr. Jay on the subject of the treaty they were to make together, and mentioned in general, as a principle, that the two Powers should consider each other's conveniency, and accommodate and compensate each other as well as they could. That an exact compensation might, perhaps, not be possible, but should be approached as nearly as the nature of things would admit. Thus, says he, if there is a certain thing which would be convenient to each of us, but more convenient to one than to the other, it should be given to the one to whom it would be most convenient, and compensation made by giving another thing to the other, for the same reason. I suppose he had in view something relating to boundaries or territories, because, he added, we will sit down together with maps in our hands, and, by that means, shall see our way more clearly. I learnt from him, that the expedition against Providence had sailed, but no advice was yet received of its success. On our going out, he took pains himself to open the folding doors for us,

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\* See above, p. 270.



which is a high compliment here; and told us he would return our visit, (*rendre son devoir*,) and then fix a day with us for dining with him. I dined with Mr. Jay and a company of Americans at his lodgings.

*Sunday, July 1st.* Mr. Grenville called on me.\*

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CORRESPONDENCE CONTINUED.

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TO HENRY LAURENS.

Passy, July 2d, 1782.

Sir,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me from Lyons the 24th past.

I wonder a little at Mr. — not acquainting you whether your name was in the commission or not. I begin to suspect, from various circumstances, that the British Ministry, elated perhaps too much by the success of Admiral Rodney, are not in earnest to treat immediately, but rather wish delay. They seem to hope that further successes may enable them to treat more advantageously; or, as some suppose, that certain propositions to be made to Congress by General Carleton, may render a treaty here with us unnecessary. A little bad news, which it is possible they may yet receive from the same quarter, will contribute to set them right, and then we may enter seriously upon the treaty; otherwise I conjecture it may not take place till after another campaign. Mr. Jay is arrived here. Mr. Grenville and Mr. Oswald continue here. Mr. Oswald has yet received no commission; and that of Mr. Grenville does not very clearly comprehend us according to British ideas; therefore it requires explication. When I know more, you shall have further information.

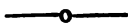
Not having an immediate answer to what I wrote you, concerning

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\* Dr. Franklin's Journal closes here. His ill state of health seems to have been the cause of his discontinuing it. The narrative of the negotiation is kept up, however, in the letters of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Laurens.

the absolution of Lord Cornwallis's parole, and Major Ross coming over hither from him to press it, I gave him the discharge you desired. Enclosed I send you a copy. I hear it has proved satisfactory to him; I hope it will be so to you.

Believe me to be, with great esteem, &c., **B. FRANKLIN.**



**ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.**

Philadelphia, July 5th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to transmit to you a letter from the United States in Congress to his Most Christian Majesty, together with a copy for your perusal. I also enclose a resolution of Congress on the subject of Mr. Lee's demands, which you will see carried into effect.

Nothing of moment has occurred since I last wrote you. It is very long since we heard from Europe. We wait for your despatches with some degree of impatience. I hope they will be sufficiently particular to answer our expectations.

I have the honor to be, sir, **ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.**

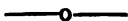


**NOTE FROM M. DE LA FAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.**

Paris, July 9th, 1782.

I have the honor to inform you, my dear sir, that Mr. Grenville's express is arrived this morning, by way of Ostend. The gentleman is gone to Versailles. I fancy he will wait upon you, and I will be much obliged to you to let me know what your opinion is. I am going to Saint Germain, but if any intelligence comes to hand, I will communicate it as soon as possible.

I rest respectfully and affectionately yours, **LA FAYETTE.**



**TO M. DE LA FAYETTE.**

Passy, July 9th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Grenville has been with me in his return from Versailles.

He tells me that Lord Rockingham being dead, Lord Shelburne is appointed First Lord of the Treasury, and that Mr. Fox has resigned; so that both the secretaryships are vacant. That his communication to Count de Vergennes was only, that no change was thereby made in the dispositions of that Court for peace, &c., and he expects another courier with full instructions in a few days. As soon as I hear more I shall acquaint you with it.

I am ever, with great respect and affection, your most obedient,  
humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

—○—  
TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Paris, July 10th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

I received your favor of the 26th past by Mr. Young, and am indebted to you for some preceding. I do not know why the good work of peace goes on so slowly on your side. Some have imagined that your Ministers, since Rodney's success, are desirous of trying fortune a little further before they conclude the war; others, that they have not a good understanding with each other. What I have just heard seems to countenance this opinion. It is said Mr. Fox has resigned. We are ready here, on the part of America, to enter into treaty with you in concurrence with our allies, and are disposed to be very reasonable; but if your *Plenipotentiary*, notwithstanding that character, is upon every proposition obliged to send a courier and wait an answer, we shall not soon see the happy conclusion. It has been suspected, too, that you wait to hear the effect of some overtures, sent by General Carleton for a separate peace in America. A vessel just arrived from Maryland brings us the unanimous resolutions of their Assembly, for continuing the war at all hazards, rather than violate their faith with France. This is a sample of the success to be expected from such a measure, if it has really been taken, which I hardly believe.

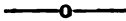
There is, methinks, a point that has been too little considered in treaties: the means of making them durable. An honest peasant, from the mountains of Provence, brought me the other day a manuscript he had written on the subject, and which he could not procure permission to print. It appeared to me to have much good sense in it; and therefore I got some copies to be struck off for him

to distribute where he may think fit. I send you one enclosed. This man aims at no profit from his pamphlet or his project, asks for nothing, expects nothing, and does not even desire to be known. He has acquired, he tells me, a fortune of near one hundred and fifty crowns a year, (about eighteen pounds sterling,) with which he is content. This you may imagine would not afford the expense of riding to Paris, so he came on foot ; such was his zeal for peace, and the hope of forwarding and securing it, by communicating his ideas to great men here. His rustic and poor appearance has prevented his access to them, or his obtaining their attention ; but he does not seem yet to be discouraged. I honor much the character of this *véritable philosophe*.

I thank you much for your letters of May the 1st, 13th, and 25th, with your proposed preliminaries. It is a pleasure to me to find our sentiments so concurring on points of importance ; it makes discussions as unnecessary as they might between us be inconvenient.

I am, my dear sir, with great esteem and affection, yours ever,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Passy, July 10th, 1782.

Sir,

By the original law of nations, war and extirpation were the punishment of injury. Humanizing by degrees, it admitted slavery instead of death. A further step was, the exchange of prisoners instead of slavery. Another, to respect more the property of private persons under conquest, and to be content with acquired dominion. Why should not the law of nations go on improving ? Ages have intervened between its several steps, but as knowledge of late increases rapidly, why should not those steps be quickened ? Why should it not be agreed to as the future law of nations, that in any war hereafter the following descriptions of men should be undisturbed, have the protection of both sides, and be permitted to follow their employments in surety, viz :

1. Cultivators of the earth, because they labor for the subsistence of mankind.
2. Fishermen, for the same reason.
3. Merchants and traders, in unarmed ships, who accommodate

different nations by communicating and exchanging the necessaries and conveniences of life.

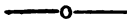
4. Artists and mechanics, inhabiting and working in open towns.

It is hardly necessary to add, that the hospitals of enemies should not be molested; they ought to be assisted.

In short, I would have nobody fought with, but those who are paid for fighting. If obliged to take corn from the farmer, friend or enemy, I would pay him for it; the same for the fish or goods of the others.

This once established, that encouragement to war, which arises from a spirit of rapine, would be taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

B. FRANKLIN.



TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Passy, July 11th, 1762.

Dear Sir,

In mine of yesterday, which went by Mr. Young, I made no mention of yours of May 11th, it not being before me. I have just found it.

You speak of a "proposed dependent State of America, which you thought Mr. Oswald would begin with." As yet I have heard nothing of it. I have all along understood (perhaps I have understood more than was intended) that the point of dependence was given up, and that we are to be treated with as a free people. I am not sure that Mr. Oswald has explicitly said so, but I know that Mr. Grenville has, and that he was to make that declaration previous to the commencement of the treaty. It is now intimated to me from several quarters, that Lord Shelburne's plan is to retain the sovereignty for the King, giving us otherwise an independent Parliament, and a Government similar to that of late intended for Ireland. If this be really his project, our negociation for peace will not go very far. The thing is impracticable and impossible, being inconsistent with the faith we have pledged, to say nothing of the general disposition of our people. Upon the whole, I should believe, that though Lord Shelburne might formerly have entertained such an idea, he had probably dropped it before he sent Mr. Oswald here; your words above cited do however throw a little doubt in my mind, and have,

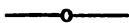
with the intimations of others, made me less free in communication with his lordship, whom I much esteem and honor, than I should otherwise have been. I wish, therefore, you would afford me what you can of *eclaircissement*.

This letter going by a courier, will probably get to hand long before the one preceding in date, which went by Mr. Young, who travels on foot. I therefore enclose the copy of it, which was taken in the press. You may return it to me when the other arrives.

By the return of the courier, you may oblige me, by communicating what is fairly communicable of the history of Mr. Fox's and Lord J. Cavendish's resignation, with any other changes made or likely to be made.

With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Passy, July 12th, 1782.

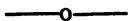
Sir,

I enclose a letter for Lord Shelburne, to go by your courier, with some others, of which I request his care. They may be put into the penny post. I have received a note informing me, that "some opposition given by his lordship to Mr. Fox's decided *plan of unequivocally acknowledging American independence*, was one cause of that gentleman's resignation;" this, from what you have told me, appears improbable. It is further said, "that Mr. Grenville thinks Mr. Fox's resignation will be fatal to the present negociation." This perhaps is as groundless as the former. Mr. Grenville's next courier will probably clear up matters. I did understand from him, that such an acknowledgment was intended previous to the commencement of the treaty; until it is made, and the treaty formally begun, propositions and discussions seem in consideration to be untimely; nor can I enter into particulars without Mr. Jay, who is now ill with the influenza. My letter, therefore, to his lordship is merely complimentary on his late appointment. I wish a continuance of your health in that at present sickly city, being with sincere esteem, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I send you enclosed the late resolutions of the State of

Maryland, by which the general disposition of people in America may be guessed, respecting any treaty to be proposed by General Carleton, if intended, which I do not believe.



TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

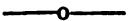
Passy, July 12th, 1782.

My Lord,

Mr. Oswald informing me that he is about to despatch a courier, I embrace the opportunity of congratulating your lordship on your appointment to the Treasury. It is an extension of your power to do good, and in that view, if in no other, it must increase your happiness, which I heartily wish.

Being with great and sincere respect, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO M. DE LA FAYETTE.

Passy, July 24th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

In answer to your questions, Mr. Oswald is doing nothing, having neither powers nor instructions; and being tired of doing nothing, has despatched a courier requesting leave to return. He has, I believe, received no letters, since I saw you, from Lord Shelburne. Mr. Grenville's return hither is, I think, doubtful, as he was particularly connected in friendship with Mr. Fox; but if he stays, I suppose some other will be sent, for I do not yet see sufficient reason to think they would abandon the negociation, though, from some appearances, I imagine they are more intent upon dividing us, than upon making a general peace. I have heard nothing further from Mr. Laurens, nor received any paper from him respecting Lord Cornwallis. And since that General's letter, written after the battle of Camden, and ordering not only the confiscation of rebels' estates, but the hanging of prisoners, has been made public, I should not wonder if the Congress were to disallow our absolution of his parole, and call him to America.

With everlasting esteem and respect, I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, July 26th, 1782.

My dear Friend,

You will have heard before you receive this, that Mr. Thomas Townshend is appointed Secretary of State for that department to which the American correspondence belongs. He is, and has been for many years, one of my most intimate friends. A more honorable and honest man does not exist. I have been requested, in connexion with him, to undertake one branch of his office relating to America, as instrumental to some necessary arrangements in the course of a negotiation for peace with America. The point which I have been requested to undertake is the case, or rather the diversity of cases, of the American refugees. I understand, that in the progress of this business, I shall be referred to a correspondence with you, as matter may arise. My purpose, therefore, for the present, is only to advertise you of this, in case you should have any preliminary matter to give or receive elucidation upon. I am very ready to undertake any matter, which may be necessary or instrumental towards peace, especially in connexion with my worthy friend Mr. Townshend.

You know all my principles upon American pacification, and *sweet reconciliation*. I shall always remain in the same. But the delegation of a single point to me, such as the case of the refugees, does not entitle me to advise upon the great outlines or principles of such pacific negotiations. I shall retain my full reservation in such points as events may justify. My personal motive for saying this to you is obvious. But, in point of justice to those who have at present the direction of public measures in this country, I must request that this caution of mine may be accepted only as personal to myself, and not as inferential upon the conduct of others, where I am not a party. Having taken a zealous part in the principles and negotiations of peace, I wish to stand clear from any collateral constructions, which might affect myself, and at the same time not to impose any collateral or inferential constructions upon others.

God prosper the work of peace and *good will* (as the means of peace) among men.

I am ever your affectionate friend,

D. HARTLEY.

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## LORD GRANTHAM TO B. FRANKLIN.

Whitehall, July 26th, 1782.

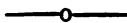
Sir,

As the first object of my wishes is to contribute to the establishment of an honorable and lasting peace, I address myself to you without ceremony, upon the conviction that you agree with me in this principle. If I was not convinced that it was also the real system of the Ministers of this country, I should not now be coöperating with them. The step they had already taken in sending Mr. Grenville to Paris is a proof of their intentions, and as that gentleman does not return to his station there, I trust that the immediate appointment of a person to succeed him, will testify my agreement to the principles upon which he was employed. I therefore beg leave to recommend Mr. Fitzherbert to your acquaintance, who has the King's commands to repair to Paris.

As I have not the advantage of being known to you, I can claim no pretence for my application to you but my public situation, and my desire to merit your confidence upon a subject of so much importance as a pacification between the parties engaged in a calamitous war.

I have the honor to be, with great regard, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

GRANTHAM.



## LORD SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Shelburne House, July 27th, 1782.

Sir,

I am much obliged by the honor of your letter of the 12th instant. You do me most acceptable justice, in supposing my happiness intimately connected with that of mankind, and I can with truth assure you it will give me great satisfaction, in every situation, to merit the continuance of your good opinion.

I have the honor to be, with very sincere regard and esteem, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

SHELBURNE.

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Passy, July 28th, 1782.

Sir,

I have but this moment had an opportunity, by the departure of my company, of perusing the letters you put into my hands this afternoon, and I return them directly without waiting till our interview to-morrow morning, because I would not give a moment's delay to the delivery of those directed to other persons.

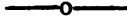
The situation of Captain Asgill and his family afflicts me, but I do not see what can be done by any one here to relieve them. It cannot be supposed that General Washington has the least desire of taking the life of that gentleman. His aim is to obtain the punishment of a deliberate murder, committed on a prisoner in cold blood, by Captain Lippincott. If the English refuse to deliver up or punish this murderer, it is saying, that they choose to preserve him rather than Captain Asgill. It seems to me, therefore, that the application should be made to the English Ministers for positive orders, directing General Carleton to deliver up Lippincott, which orders being obtained, should be despatched immediately by a swift sailing vessel. I do not think any other means can produce the effect desired. The cruel murders of this kind, committed by the English on our people, since the commencement of the war, are innumerable. The Congress and their Generals, to satisfy the people, have often threatened retaliation, but have always hitherto forborne to execute it; and they have been often insultingly told by their enemies, that this forbearance did not proceed from humanity, but fear. General Greene, though he solemnly and publicly promised it in a proclamation, never made any retaliation for the murder of Colonel Haynes, and many others in Carolina, and the people, who now think if he had fulfilled his promise this crime would not have been committed, clamor so loudly that I doubt General Washington cannot well refuse what appears to them so just and necessary for their common security. I am persuaded that nothing I could say to him on the occasion would have the least effect in changing his determination.

Excuse me, then, if I presume to advise the despatching a courier immediately to London, proposing to the consideration of Ministers the sending such orders to General Carleton directly. They would have an excellent effect in other views. The post goes to-morrow

morning at ten o'clock, but as nine days have been spent in bringing the letters here by that conveyance, an express is preferable.

With sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, August 8th, 1782.

Sir,

Yesterday Mr. Oswald communicated to Mr. Jay and me a paper he had just received from his Court, being a copy of the King's orders to the Attorney or Solicitor General to prepare a commission to pass the great seal, appointing him to treat with us, &c., and he showed us a letter from Mr. Secretary Townshend, which expresses his concern that the commission itself could not be sent by this courier, the officers who were to expedite it being in the country, which would occasion a delay of eight or ten days; but that its being then sent might be depended on, and it was hoped the treaty might, in the mean time, be proceeded on. Mr. Oswald left with me a copy of the paper, which I enclose for your Excellency's consideration, and am, with great respect, sir, your Excellency's, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, August 8th, 1782.

I have received, sir, the letter of this day, with which you have honored me, and the copy of the power which Mr. Oswald has communicated to you. The form in which it appears is not that which is usual on similar occasions, but it has not prevented me from forming my opinion in the first instance. I have bestowed the greatest attention on it; and if you will be so good as to favor me with a visit on Saturday morning, I shall confer with you and Mr. Jay, if it will be convenient for him to accompany you.

I have the honor to be, most sincerely, sir, your most humble servant,

DE VERGENNES.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, August 9th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

Having written to Mr. Jay, who I presume is with you, I do not think it necessary to repeat what I have mentioned to him. We have not heard from you since March; a very long period, considering the interesting events that have taken place between that time and this. Many vessels have arrived without bringing us a line from you. I am apprehensive that Mr. Barclay does not communicate to you the frequent opportunities that offer of writing. I shall write to him upon the subject.

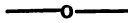
Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby have informed the General, that a negociation for a general peace is now on foot, and that the King, his master, has agreed to yield the independence of America without making it conditional. I shall enclose a copy of his letter at large, which refers to another object, the exchange of prisoners. This great point once yielded, I see nothing that will obstruct your negociations, except three points of discussion, which I have before written to you about. I wish it had been possible to obtain the estimates I mention, as they might have been rendered useful to you upon one of them; but the negligence of the Governors or Legislatures of the several States has rendered all my endeavors hitherto unsuccessful, notwithstanding repeated promises to give this subject their earliest attention. The restoration of confiscated property has become utterly impossible, and the attempt would throw the country into the utmost confusion.

The fisheries are too important an object for you to lose sight of; and as to the back lands, I do not conceive that England can seriously expect to derive any benefit from them that will be equivalent to the jealousy that the possession of them would awaken and keep alive between her and this country. I transmit to you a bill for seventy-one thousand three hundred and eighty livres, being the amount of one quarter's salary to yourself, and Messrs. Jay, Adams, Carmichael, Dana, and Dumas. No provision is made for the private secretaries or contingencies, not having been furnished with an account of them. I also send bills for the first quarter, commencing in January, so that you will, on the receipt of this, be enabled to pay one half year's salary to our Ministers and their secretaries.

I just now learn that Carleton has published his and Digby's letter to the General. The design of this must either be to see whether the people of this country will catch so eagerly at the proposition for a peace which yields them their independence, as to be careless about the alliance, or to impress us with an idea that we are more indebted for our freedom to the generosity of Great Britain than to the attention of France to our interests in the general treaty. It is not to be doubted, that the good sense and the gratitude of this country will defeat both these objects.

I have the honor to be, &c., **ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.**

P. S. If Mr. Jay should not be at Paris, I must beg you to open and decipher for him the letter of this month, and the resolution contained therein, marked on the back, below the seal, *August*, and send it to him by the earliest opportunity.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, August 12th, 1783.

Sir,

I have lately been honored with your several letters, No. 10, March 9th; No. 11, May 22d; and No. 12, May 30th.

The paper containing a state of the commerce in North America, and explaining the necessity and utility of convoys for its protection, I have laid before the Minister, accompanied by a letter, pressing that it be taken into immediate consideration; and I hope it may be attended with success.

The order of Congress for liquidating the accounts between this Court and the United States was executed before it arrived. All the accounts against us for money lent, and stores, arms, ammunition, clothing, &c., furnished by Government, were brought in and examined, and a balance received, which made the debt amount to the even sum of eighteen millions, exclusive of the Holland loan, for which the King is guarantee. I send a copy of the instrument to Mr. Morris. In reading it, you will discover several fresh marks of the King's goodness towards us, amounting to the value of near two millions. These, added to the free gifts before made us at different times, form an object of at least twelve millions, for which no returns

but that of gratitude and friendship are expected. These, I hope, may be everlasting. The constant good understanding between France and the Swiss Cantons, and the steady benevolence of this Crown towards them, afford us a well grounded hope that our alliance may be as durable and as happy for both nations; there being strong reasons for our union, and no crossing interests between us. I write fully to Mr. Morris on money affairs, who will doubtless communicate to you my letter, so that I need say the less to you on that subject.

The letter to the King was well received; the accounts of your rejoicings on the news of the dauphin's birth give pleasure here; as do the firm conduct of Congress in refusing to treat with General Carleton, and the unanimous resolutions of the Assemblies of different States on the same subject. All ranks of this nation appear to be in good humor with us, and our reputation rises throughout Europe. I understand from the Swedish Ambassador, that their treaty with us will go on as soon as ours with Holland is finished; our treaty with France, with such improvements as that with Holland may suggest, being intended as the basis.

There have been various misunderstandings and mismanagements among the parties concerned in the expedition of the *Bon Homme Richard*, which have occasioned delay in dividing the prize money. M. de Chaumont, who was chosen by the captains of all the vessels in the expedition as their agent, has long been in a state little short of bankruptcy, and some of the delays have possibly been occasioned by the distress of his affairs. He now informs me that the money is in the hands of the Minister of the Marine. I shall in a few days present the memorial you propose, with one relating to the prisoners, and will acquaint you with the answer. Mr. Barclay is still in Holland; when he returns he may take into his hands what money can be obtained on that account.

I think your observations respecting the Danish complaints through the Minister of France perfectly just. I will receive no more of them by that channel, and will give your reasons to justify my refusal.

Your approbation of my idea of a medal to perpetuate the memory of York and Saratoga victories gives me great pleasure, and encourages me to have it struck. I wish you would acquaint me with what kind of a monument at York the emblems required are

to be fixed on; whether an obelisk or a column; its dimensions; whether any part of it is to be marble, and the emblems carved on it; and whether the work is to be executed by the excellent artists in that way which Paris affords; and if so, to what expense they are to be limited. This puts me in mind of a monument I got made here and sent to America, by order of Congress, five years since. I have heard of its arrival, and nothing more. It was admired here for its elegant antique simplicity of design, and the various beautiful marbles used in its composition. It was intended to be fixed against a wall in the State House of Philadelphia. I know not why it has been so long neglected; it would, methinks, be well to inquire after it, and get it put up somewhere. Directions for fixing it were sent with it. I enclose a print of it. The inscription in the engraving is not on the monument; it was merely the fancy of the engraver. There is a white plate of marble left smooth to receive such inscription as the Congress should think proper.

Our countrymen who have been prisoners in England are sent home, a few excepted, who were sick, and who will be forwarded as soon as recovered. This eases us of a very considerable charge.

I communicated to the Marquis de la Fayette the paragraph of your letter which related to him. He is still here; and as there seems not much likelihood of an active campaign in America, he is probably more useful where he is. His departure, however, though delayed, is not absolutely laid aside.

The second changes in the Ministry of England have occasioned, or have afforded, pretences for various delays in the negotiation for peace. Mr. Grenville had two successive imperfect commissions. He was at length recalled; and Mr. Fitzherbert is now arrived to replace him, with a commission in due form to treat with France, Spain, and Holland. Mr. Oswald, who is here, is informed by a letter from the new Secretary of State, that a commission empowering him to treat with the Commissioners of Congress will pass the seals, and be sent him in a few days; till he arrives, this Court will not proceed in its own negotiation. I send the *Enabling Act*, as it is called. Mr. Jay will acquaint you with what passes between him and the Spanish Ambassador respecting the proposed treaty with Spain. I will only mention, that my conjecture of that Court's design to coop us up within the Alleghany mountains is now manifested. I hope Congress will insist on the Mississippi as the

boundary, and the free navigation of the river, from which they could entirely exclude us.

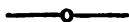
An account of a terrible massacre of the Moravian Indians has been put into my hands. I sent you the papers, that you may see how the fact is represented in Europe. I hope measures will be taken to secure what is left of those unfortunate people.

Mr. Laurens is at Nantes, waiting for a passage with his family to America. His state of health is unfortunately very bad. Perhaps the sea air may recover him, and restore him well to his country. I heartily wish it. He has suffered much by his confinement.

Be pleased, sir, to present my duty to the Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Passy, August 12th, 1782.

Sir,

I have received (many of them at the same time) your sundry letters of March the 23d, April 8th and 17th, May 17th, 18th, two of the 23d and 29th. It would be a satisfaction to me if you would likewise mention from time to time the dates of those you receive from me.

Most of your letters press my obtaining more money for the present year. The late losses suffered in the West Indies, and the unforeseen necessary expenses the reparation there and here must occasion, render it more difficult, and I am told impossible; though the good disposition of the Court towards us continues perfect. All I can say on the head of money, more than I have said in preceding letters, is, that I confide you will be careful not to bankrupt your banker by your drafts; and I will do my utmost that those you draw shall be duly honored.

The plan you intimate for discharging the bills in favor of Beaumarchais, though well imagined, was impracticable. I had accepted them, and he had discounted them, or paid them away, or divided them amongst his creditors. They were, therefore, in different hands, with whom I could not manage the transactions



proposed. Besides, I had paid them punctually when they became due, which was before the receipt of your letter on that subject. That he was furnished with his funds by the Government here is a supposition of which no foundation appears; he says it was by a company he had formed; and when he solicited me to give up a cargo in part of payment, he urged, with tears in his eyes, the distress himself and associates were reduced to by our delay of remittances. I am glad to see that it is intended to appoint a commissioner to settle all our public accounts in Europe. I hope he will have better success with M. Beaumarchais than I have had. He has often promised solemnly to render an account in two or three days. Years have since elapsed, and he has not yet done it. Indeed I doubt whether his books have been so well kept as to make it possible.

You direct me, in yours of May 17th, to pay over into the hands of Mr. Grand, on your account, such moneys belonging to the United States as may be in Europe, distinct from those to be advanced for the current year. I would do it with pleasure if there were any such. There may be, indeed, some in Holland, raised by the new loan, but that is not in my disposition, though I have no doubt that Mr. Adams will, on occasion, apply it in support of your credit. As to all the aids given by the Crown, all the sums borrowed of it, and all the Dutch loans of ten millions, though the orders to receive have been given to me, the payments from the *Tresor Royal* have all been made on my orders in favor of Mr. Grand, and the money again paid away by him on drafts for public services and expenses, as you will see by his accounts; so that I never saw or touched a livre of it, except what I received from him in discharge of my salary, and some disbursements. He has even received the whole six millions of the current year, so that I have nothing in any shape to pay over to him. On occasion of my lately desiring to know the state of our funds, that I might judge whether I could undertake to pay what you were directed to pay to Mr. William Lee, by vote of Congress, as soon as the state of public finances would admit, Mr. Grand wrote me a note, with a short sketch of their then supposed situation, which I enclosed. You will probably have from him, as soon as possible, a more perfect account; but this will serve to show that I could not prudently comply with your wish, of making that payment to Mr. Lee, and I have accordingly

declined it ; the less unwillingly as he is entitled by the vote to interest.

I send herewith the accounts of the supplies we have received in goods, which I promised in my last.

The sum of their value is included in the settlement made with this Court, mentioned in a former letter. Herewith I also send a copy of the contract, which has been long in hand, and but lately completed. The term of the first yearly payment we are to make was readily changed at my request, from the first to the third year after the peace ; the other marks of the King's bounty towards us will be seen in the instrument. The interest already due and forgiven amounts to more than a million and a half. What might become due before the peace is uncertain. The charges of exchange, commissions, brokerage, &c., of the Dutch loan, amount to more than five hundred thousand livres, which is also given, so that we have the whole sum net, and are to pay for it but four per cent. This liquidation of our accounts with the Court was completed before the vote of Congress directing it came to hand. Mr. Grand examined all the particulars, and I have no doubt of its being approved.

Mr. Grand, to whom I have communicated your letter of April 17th, will soon write to you fully. We shall observe the general rule you give respecting the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th bills. The attention, care, and pains necessary to prevent (by exact accounts of those accepted, and an examination of those offered) impositions which are often attempted by presenting at a distant time, the 2d, 3d, &c., are much greater than I could have imagined. Much has been saved by that attention, of which of late we keep an account ; but the hazard of loss by such attempts might be diminished, together with the trouble of examination, by making fewer small bills.

Your conduct, activity, and address as a financier and provider for the exigencies of the State, are much admired and praised here, their good consequences being so evident, particularly with regard to the rising credit of our country and the value of bills. No one but yourself can enjoy your growing reputation more than I do.

Mr. Grand has undertaken to pay any balance that may be found due to Messrs. le Couteulx out of the money in his hands. Applying for so small a sum as 5,000 livres would be giving trouble for a trifle, as all applications for money must be considered in council.

Mr. Grand having already received the whole six millions, either in money or accepted bills, payable at different periods, I expect he will deliver up to me the bills for that sum which you have drawn upon me, the rather as they express value received by you. I never heard of any mention here of intended monthly payments, or that the money could not be obtained but by your drafts. I enclose a letter, by which the payment was ordered of the last three millions.

I observe what you mention of the order, that the Ministers' salaries are to be hereafter paid in America. I hereby empower and desire you to receive and remit mine. I do not doubt your doing it regularly and timely; for a Minister without money, I perceive, makes a ridiculous figure here, though secure from arrests. I have taken a quarter's advance of salary from the 4th of last month, supposing it not intended to *muzzle immediately the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.*

With great esteem, I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Your boys are well, and Mr. Ridley and Mr. Barclay still in Holland.

—o—

DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, August 16th, 1783.

My dear Friend,

Yours I received by Major Young, together with the work of your *véritable philosophe*, which is full of humanity. I was not before that at a loss where I should have looked for my *véritable philosophe* in the present actual scene of public politics. Your honest, anxious, and unremitting endeavors towards the reëstablishment of peace, must endear you to your own country and to all mankind. Whatever may have been transacted in America, (if it can be possible that the suspicions which you mention should become true, viz: to tamper with America for a breach of faith, of which some suspicions seem to be thrown out by the Provinces of Maryland and Philadelphia,) I can give the strongest testimonies of the constant honor and good faith of your conduct and correspondencies; and my letters to you will bear me equal testimony, that I have never thrown out any dishonorable suggestions to you. When the proposed Congress of your *véritable philosophe* shall meet, neither of us need fear its

censures, upon the strictest examination of our correspondence. We will claim the poet's character of the sincere statesman,

“Who knew no thought but what the world might hear.”

In times of suspicion it must be some satisfaction to both of us to know, that no line or word has ever passed between us but what the Governments of Great Britain, France, and America, might freely peruse as the words of good faith, peace, and *sweet reconciliation*.

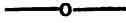
The resolutions of Maryland and Philadelphia, together with the slow proceedings of our *Plenipotentiaries*, and even the doubt suggested, whether they may not be waiting for events in America, give me much concern. Not being informed to a certainty of the state of the negotiation, I have declined any concern with the Ministry upon the subject of the refugees, &c. My assistance cannot be indispensable upon that topic, but I deem it indispensable to myself not to be committed in unknown ground, which, from the points above mentioned, must appear dubious to me. These are the reasons which I gave to the Minister for declining. I must, at the same time, give him the justice of the most absolute and unlimited professions of sincerity for peace. Whatever divisions there may have been, as you say, suspected in the Cabinet, there are some of his colleagues still remaining in whom I have the greatest confidence for sincerity and good intentions. The public prints of this country have stated what are called *shades* of difference as to the mode. Those opinions which are imputed to Mr. Fox are certainly most suitable to my opinions. I am free to confess to you, that my wishes would have been to have taken the most decisive ground relating to independence, &c., immediately from the 27th of March last, viz: the accession of the change of Ministry. But I agree with you in sentiment, viz: to concur with all the good that offers, when we cannot obtain all the good that we might wish. The situation of my sentiments at present is, an unbiased neutrality of expectation, as events may justify.

I shall be obliged to you for the earliest communications of any public events in America that may come to Europe, with any public resolutions of Congress or the Provinces, &c., and all memorials or negotiations which may pass between the parties in America. I am very anxious to have the earliest information to form my opinions

upon, and to be prepared accordingly. My utmost endeavors will always be exerted to the blessed work of peace.

I am ever, your affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

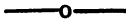
Versailles, August 23d, 1782.

Sir,

I have received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 9th instant, as well as the memorial enclosed in it. I communicated the paper to the Marquis de Castries, and I make no doubt but that the Minister will take into consideration its contents, as far as circumstances will permit. We are desirous to adopt every measure that may tend to the prosperity of the commerce established between France and the United States, and we shall neglect nothing to accomplish this object to the universal satisfaction of the two countries. Congress will greatly facilitate our labor, if they will communicate their ideas and wishes on this subject; and I make the request with greater confidence, as I am convinced that that assembly desires as much as we do to establish, on an advantageous and solid basis, the commercial concerns between France and America.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



THOMAS TOWNSHEND TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Whitehall, September 1st, 1782.

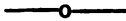
Sir,

I have received and laid before the King your letters of the 17th, 18th, and 21st ultimo; and I am commanded to signify to you his Majesty's approbation of your conduct in communicating to the American Commissioners the fourth article of your instructions, which could not but convince them that the negociation for peace, and the cession of independence to the Thirteen United Colonies,

were intended to be carried on and concluded with the Commissioners in Europe.

Those gentlemen having expressed their satisfaction concerning that article, it is hoped they will not entertain a doubt of his Majesty's determination to exercise, in the fullest extent, the powers with which the act of Parliament has invested him, by granting to America full, complete, and unconditional independence, in the most explicit manner, as an article of treaty.

T. TOWNSHEND.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, September 3d, 1782.

Sir,

I have just received yours, No. 13, dated the 23d of June. The accounts of the general sentiments of our people respecting propositions from England, and the rejoicings on the birth of the Dauphin, give pleasure here; and it affords me much satisfaction to find the conduct of Congress approved by all who hear or speak of it, and to see all the marks of a constantly growing regard for us, and confidence in us, among those in whom such sentiments are most to be desired.

I hope the affair of Captain Asgill was settled as it ought to be, by the punishment of Lippincott. Applications have been made here to obtain letters in favor of the young gentleman. Enclosed I send you a copy of the answer I gave to that made to me.

I had before acquainted M. Tousard, that his pension would be paid in America, and there only, it being unreasonable to expect that Congress should open a pay office in every part of the world, where pensioners should choose to reside. I shall communicate to him that part of your letter.

You wish to know what allowance I make to my private secretary. My grandson, William T. Franklin, came over with me, served me as a private secretary during the time of the Commissioners; and no secretary to the Commission arriving, though we had been made to expect one, he did business for us all, and this without any allowance for his services, though both Mr. Lee and Mr. Deane at times mentioned it to me as a thing proper to be done, and in justice due to him. When I became appointed sole Minister here, and the whole business, which the Commissioners had before divided with

me, came into my hands, I was obliged to exact more service from him, and he was indeed, by being so long in the business, become capable of doing more. At length, in the beginning of the year 1781, when he became of age, considering his constant close attention to the duties required, and his having thereby missed the opportunity of studying the law, for which he had been intended, I determined to make him some compensation for the time past, and fix some compensation for the time to come, till the pleasure of Congress respecting him should be known. I accordingly settled an account with him, allowing him, from the beginning of December, 1776, to the end of 1777, the sum of 3,400 livres, and for the year 1778, the sum of 4,000 livres, for 1779, 4,800 livres, and for 1780, 6,000 livres. Since that time I have allowed him at the rate of three hundred louis per annum, being what I saw had been allowed by Congress to the secretary of Mr. William Lee, who could not have had, I imagine, a fourth part of the business to go through; since my secretary, besides the writing and copying the papers relative to my common ministerial transactions, has had all those occasioned by my acting in the various employments of judge of admiralty, consul, purchaser of goods for the public, &c., &c., besides that of accepting the Congress bills, a business that requires being always at home, bills coming by post from different ports and countries, and often requiring immediate answers, whether good or not, and to that end, it being necessary to examine by the books, exactly kept of all preceding acceptances, in order to detect double presentations, which happen very frequently. The great number of these bills makes almost sufficient business for one person, and the confinement they occasion is such, that we cannot allow ourselves a day's excursion into the country, and the want of exercise has hurt our healths in several instances.

The Congress pay much larger salaries to some secretaries, who, I believe, deserve them; but not more than my grandson does the comparatively small one I have allowed to him, his fidelity, exactitude, and address in transacting business being really what one could wish in such an officer; and the genteel appearance a young gentleman in his station obliges him to make requiring at least such an income. I do not mention the extraordinary business that has been imposed upon us in this embassy, as a foundation for demanding higher salaries than others. I never solicited for a public office,

either for myself or any relation, yet I never refused one, that I was capable of executing, when public service was in question, and I never bargained for salary, but contented myself with whatever my constituents were pleased to allow me. The Congress will therefore consider every particle charged in my account distinct from the salary originally voted, not as what I presume to insist upon, but as what I propose only for their consideration, and they will allow what they think proper.

You desire an accurate estimate of those contingent expenses. I enclose copies of two letters,\* which passed between Mr. Adams and me on the subject, and show the articles of which they consist. Their amount in different years may be found in my accounts, except the article of house rent, which has never yet been settled; M. de Chaumont, our landlord, having originally proposed to leave it till the end of the war, and then to accept for it a piece of American land from the Congress, such as they might judge equivalent. If the Congress did intend all contingent charges whatever to be included in the salary, and do not think proper to pay on the whole so much, in that case I would humbly suggest, that the saving may be most conveniently made by a diminution of the salary, leaving the contingencies to be charged; because they may necessarily be very different in different years, and at different courts.

I have been more diffuse on this subject, as your letter gave occasion for it, and it is probably the last time I shall mention it. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, assure them of my best services, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. As you will probably lay this letter before Congress, I take the liberty of joining to it an extract of my letter to the President, of the 12th of March, 1781, and of repeating my request therein contained, relative to my grandson. I enclose, likewise, extracts of letters from Messrs. Jay and Laurens, which both show the regard those gentlemen have for him, and their desire of his being noticed by the Congress.†

B. F.

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\* See these letters above, pp. 158, 165.

† The following are the extracts of the letters alluded to in this place:

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM JOHN JAY TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

MADRID, *April 25th*, 1781.

The letters herewith enclosed from Dr. Franklin were left open for my perusal;  
VOL. II.—24



TO JOHN JAY.

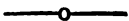
Passy, September 4th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Oswald's courier being returned, with directions to him to make the independence of America the first article in the treaty, I would wait on you, if I could, to discourse on the subject; but as I cannot, I wish to see you here this evening, if not inconvenient to you.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, September 5th, 1782.

Sir,

Having written to you lately, I should not again trouble you so

the short stay of my courier at Paris not allowing time for copies to be made of the information conveyed in and with it.

I perceive that Dr. Franklin desires to retire; this circumstance calls upon me to assure Congress, that I have reason to be perfectly satisfied with his conduct towards me, and that I have received from him all the aid and attention I could wish or expect. His character is very high here; and I really believe, that the respectability he enjoys throughout Europe has been of general use to our cause and country.

JOHN JAY.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM JOHN JAY.

MADRID, April 21st, 1781.

By the letter from Dr. Franklin, herewith enclosed, and which he was so obliging as to leave open for my perusal, I find he has requested permission to retire, on account of his age, infirmities, &c. How far his health may be impaired I know not. The letters I have received from him bear no marks of age; and there is an acuteness and sententious brevity in them which do not indicate an understanding injured by years. I have many reasons to think our country much indebted to him; and I confess it would mortify my pride as an American, if his constituents should be the only people to whom his character is known, and that should deny to his merit and services the testimony given them by other nations. Justice demands of me to assure you, that his reputation and respectability are acknowledged, and have weight here, and that I have received from him all that uniform attention and aid which were due to the importance of the affairs committed to me.

The affectionate mention he makes of his only descendant, on whom the support of his name and family will devolve, is extremely amiable, and flows in a delicate manner from that virtuous sensibility by which nature kindly extends the benefits

soon, were it not necessary to remind you, that your last letter is dated in March, since which there have been frequent arrivals from France; and since which, too, we have reason to believe, the most interesting events have taken place in Europe.

We learn from private letters and common fame, that Mr. Adams was received by the United Provinces in his public character, on the 19th of April. We have yet no account of this interesting event, nor of the measures he has pursued to accomplish our other objects in Holland. Since then Mr. Laurens, it is said, has been liberated, has travelled to Holland and to France, has entered upon the execution

of parental affection to a period beyond the limits of our lives. This is an affectionate subject; and minds susceptible of the finer sensations are insensibly led at least to wish that the feelings of an ancient patriot, going, in the evening of a long life early devoted to the public, to enjoy repose in the bosom of philosophic retirement, may be gratified by seeing some little sparks of the affection of his country rest on the only support of his age and hope of his family. Such are the effusions of my heart on this occasion, and I pour them into yours, from a persuasion that they will meet with a hospitable reception from congenial emotions.

JOHN JAY.

COLONEL JOHN LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN.

LEAGUES W. OF ORTEGAL, June 9th, 1781.

Sir,

I snatch a moment to pay my last respects to your Excellency, and to mention a matter which has occurred to me since my being on board. I have frequently reflected upon the mention which your Excellency has made of retiring from your present important station, and have never varied the opinion, which I took the liberty of giving you once at the Count de Vergennes's, viz: that the best arrangement would be to give your Excellency an active, intelligent secretary of the embassy, who might relieve you from the drudgery of office; and that your country should not be deprived of the advantages of your wisdom and influence. The difficulty hitherto has been to find a person properly qualified. The advantages which your grandson derives from his knowledge of the language and manners of the people, and his having been so long in your office, and with your Excellency, are very great. The prejudices which have been entertained against him may be removed by a personal introduction to Congress, especially if it is combined with rendering a popular service. I take the liberty of proposing to your Excellency, therefore, if you can spare Mr. Franklin for the purpose, to commit to his care the second remittance of money, and to hasten his departure with that, and as much of the public supplies of clothing, &c., as may be ready to accompany it. I am persuaded, that in public bodies the want of a personal acquaintance is a great objection to appointing a man to any important office.

The Engageante's boat demands my letter. I have written in the greatest haste upon a subject which I hope your Excellency will turn to public utility.

I am, &c.,

JOHN LAURENS.

of his trust, but has left us to gather events so interesting to him and to us from private letters, and the public prints. Mr. Jay tells us on the 24th of May, that he is about to set out for Paris, and that he presumes Dr. Franklin has assigned the reasons for this step. Doctor Franklin has told us nothing.

As to Mr. Dana, if it were not for the necessity of drawing bills in his favor, we should hardly be acquainted with his existence. It is commonly said, that Republics are better informed than monarchs of the state of their foreign affairs, and that they insist upon a greater degree of vigilance and punctuality in their Ministers. We, on the contrary, seem to have adopted a new system. The ignorance in which we are kept, of every interesting event, renders it impossible for the sovereign to instruct their servant, and of course forms them into an independent privy council for the direction of their affairs, without their advice or concurrence. I can hardly express to you what I feel on this occasion. I blush when I meet a member of Congress, who inquires into what is passing in Europe. When the General applies to me for advice on the same subject, which must regulate his movements, I am compelled to inform him, that we have no intelligence but what he has seen in the papers. The following is an extract of his last letter to me: "But how does it happen, that all our information of what is transacting in Europe should come to hand through indirect channels, or from the enemy; or does this question proceed from my unacquaintedness with facts?"

But let me dismiss a subject which gives me so much pain, in the hope that we shall in future have no further cause of complaint.

Since the evacuation of Savannah, the enemy have by the general orders contained in the enclosed papers, announced the proposed evacuation of Charleston. We are in daily expectation of hearing, therefore, that tranquillity is restored to the southern States. Several circumstances lead us to suppose that they entertain thoughts of abandoning New York sometime this fall. You *only* can inform us whether this step has been taken in consequence of any expectations they entertain of a general peace; or with a view to pursue the system, which the present Administration appears to have adopted, when they so loudly reprobate the American war; and whether, by withdrawing their troops from hence they only mean to collect their force and direct it against our allies. This knowledge would render such an alteration in our system necessary, that it affords us new

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reasons for regretting our want of information on these important points.

The Marquis de Vaudreuil has unfortunately lost the *Magnifique*, sunk by running on a rock in the harbor of Boston, where he is now, with the remainder of his fleet, except three refitting at Portsmouth, consisting of twelve sail of the line. This has enabled Congress to show their attention to his Most Christian Majesty, and their wish to promote his interests as far as their circumstances will permit, by presenting him the *America*, of seventy-four guns. Enclosed are their resolves on that subject, and the answer given by the Minister of France. The ship is in such a state, that she may by diligence be refitted for sea in about two months; and from the accounts I hear of her, she will, I believe, prove a fine ship. The General is collecting the army. The last division of the French troops marched from here this morning. When collected, they will, I presume, repair to their old post, at the White Plains, and perhaps endeavor to accelerate the departure of the enemy.

I am sorry you did not pursue your first design, and enlarge in your letter upon the subjects which you imagined would be discussed in the negociations for peace. It might have changed our sentiments, and altered our views on some points. Two things are of great moment to us, one of which at least would meet with no difficulty, if France and England understand their true interests; I mean the West India trade, and the right to cut logwood and mahogany. Without a free admission of all kinds of provisions into the Islands, our agriculture will suffer extremely. This will be severely felt at first, and when it remedies itself, which it will do in time, it must be at the expense of the nations that share our commerce. It will lessen the consumption of foreign sugars, increase the supplies which the poorer people among us draw from the maple, &c., and by reducing the price of provision, and rendering the cultivation of lands less profitable, make proportionable increase of our own manufactures, and lessen our dependence on Europe. This will, I must confess, in some measure check our population, and so far I regard it as an evil. The merchants and farmers, if precluded at a peace from the advantages which this commerce gave them while connected with England, ——.\* Then a variety of argu-

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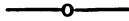
\* The sense is broken here, owing to the omission of three lines in cypher, the key to which could not be found.

ments on this subject, arising as well from the general interests of France as from her political connection with us, might be urged to show the wisdom of adopting the same liberal sentiments on this point, which has of late distinguished her in so many others. But if she should not be able to overcome her ancient prejudices, I believe they will be found to have less influence on the British, whom you will press earnestly on this head. Besides the general interest of the kingdom, there is with them a powerful West India interest to plead in behalf of a free importation of provisions into their Islands. If I mistake not, the present wishes of the nation, as well as the professions of Administration, lead to every measure, which may wear away our present resentments, and strengthen the connexion between us and them.

The logwood trade we have some claim to, from our continued exercise of the right. Nor can England pretend to exclude us from it, without invalidating her own title, which stands upon the same ground. If Spain admits the right in England, she gains nothing by excluding us, since in proportion as she diminishes our commerce in that article, she increases that of Great Britain. Other manufacturing nations are interested in exciting a competition between us at their markets.

When you write to me, be pleased to be very particular in your relation of every step which leads to a negociation. Everything of this kind must be interesting.

I have the honor to be, sir, ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



RICHARD OSWALD TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, September 5th, 1782.

Sir,

In consequence of the notice I have just now had from Mr. Jay of your desire of an extract from my last letter from the Secretary of State, regarding the proposed treaty on the subject of American affairs, and my authority in relation thereto, I take the liberty to send the same enclosed, which, together with the powers contained in the commission, which I had the honor of laying before you and Mr. Jay, I am hopeful will satisfy you of the willingness and sincere desire of his Majesty to give you entire content on that important subject.

This extract I would have sent before now, if I had thought you wished to have it before I had the honor of waiting on you myself; which was only delayed until I should be informed by Mr. Jay, that you were well enough to see me upon business.

I heartily wish you a recovery of your health, and am, with sincere esteem and regard, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,  
**RICHARD OSWALD.**

—○—  
 TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Passy, September 8th, 1782.

Sir,

I have received the honor of yours, dated the 5th instant, enclosing an extract of a letter to your Excellency, from the right honorable Thomas Townshend, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, wherein your conduct in communicating to us the fourth article of your instructions appears to have been approved by his Majesty. I suppose, therefore, that there is no impropriety in my requesting a copy of that instruction; and if you see none, I wish to receive it from you, hoping it may be of use in removing some of the difficulties that obstruct our proceeding.\*

With great and sincere esteem, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,  
**B. FRANKLIN.**

—○—  
 TO EARL GRANTHAM.

Passy, September 11th, 1782.

My Lord,

A long and severe indisposition has delayed my acknowledging

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\* Copy of the fourth article of his Majesty's instructions to Richard Oswald, for his government in treating with the Commissioners of the Thirteen United Colonies of America for a truce or peace, the said instructions being dated the 31st day of July, 1782, viz:

"4th article. In case you find the American Commissioners are not at liberty to treat on any terms short of independence, you are to declare to them that you have authority to make that concession. Our ardent wish for peace disposing us to purchase it at the price of acceding to the complete independence of the Thirteen Colonies, namely, New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Three Lower Counties on the Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, in North America."

the receipt of the letter your lordship did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Fitzherbert.

You do me justice in believing that I agree with you in earnestly wishing the establishment of an honorable and lasting peace; and I am happy to be assured by your lordship that it is the system of the Minister with whom you are coöperating. I know it to be the sincere desire of the United States, and with such dispositions on both sides there is reason to hope that the good work in its progress will meet with little difficulty. A small one has occurred in the commencement, with which Mr. Oswald will acquaint you. I flatter myself that means will be found on your part for removing it; and my best endeavors in removing the subsequent ones (if any should arise) may be relied on.

I have the honor of being known to your lordship's father. On several occasions he manifested a regard for me, and a confidence in me. I shall be happy if my conduct in the present important business may procure me the same rank in the esteem of his worthy successor.

I am, with sincere respect, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, September 12th, 1782.

Sir,

I have nothing to add to mine of the 5th instant, but to congratulate you on the safe arrival of two vessels from Holland, having on board the goods left by Commodore Gillon, and to present you in the name of Mr. Paine, with three copies of a late work of his addressed to the Abbé Raynal, in which he takes notice of some of the many errors with which his work abounds. The Abbé has a fine imagination, and he indulges it. The enclosed resolution contains an important fact, which I am using means to ascertain; but from the ill success I have hitherto met with in every similar attempt, I am fearful that it will be very long before I can effect it.

I have the honor to be, sir, with great respect and esteem, your most obedient, humble servant,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, September 12th, 1782

Sir,

Since writing the above, I have received the enclosed resolutions of Congress. I have already anticipated all that can be said upon the subject of the last; the melancholy tale of our necessities is sufficiently known to you, it has been too often repeated to need recitation.

Mr. Morris, who writes from an empty Treasury amidst perpetual duns, will speak more feelingly. In short, money must be obtained for us at any rate, whether we have peace or war. France having already done much for us, and it not being probable that we shall extend our demands beyond the present, she may think it wise not to let us open accounts with a new banker, since the debtor is always more or less under obligations to the creditor.

I have the honor to be, sir, with respect and esteem,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, September 17th, 1782.

My dear Friend,

Since those acknowledged in my last, I have received your several favors of August the 16th, 20th, and 26th. I have been a long time afflicted with the gravel and gout, which have much indisposed me for writing. I am even now in pain, but will no longer delay some answer.

I did not perfectly comprehend the nature of your appointment respecting the refugees, and I supposed you would in a subsequent letter explain it. But, as I now find you have declined the service, such explanation is become unnecessary.

I did receive the paper you inquire about, entitled *Preliminaries*, and dated May, 1782, but it was from you, and I know nothing of their having been communicated to this Court. The third proposition, "that in case the negociation between Great Britain and the allies of America should not succeed, but the war continue between them, America should act and be treated as a neutral nation,"



appeared at first sight inadmissible, being contrary to our treaty. The truce, too, seems not to have been desired by any of the parties.

With unalterable esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, ever yours, &c.;

B. FRANKLIN.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, September 18th, 1782.

Sir,

Just after closing my despatches, I was favored with yours of the 25th of April, and the 25th and 29th of June. The ships that brought them were so unfortunate as to be chased into the Delaware by a superior force. The Eagle was driven ashore and sunk. The papers and money were, however, happily saved, and part of the crew. But Captain la Fouche, not having been since heard of, is supposed to be taken. The other frigate has arrived safe, with all the passengers of both ships.

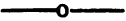
As I am just about to leave town for a short time, I will not touch upon the important subject mentioned in your letters, which will on account of my absence be committed to a special committee.

I would only observe to you, that the resolution in my last shows the sense of Congress on the subject of money matters.

You will see by the annexed resolutions, that Congress have refused to accept Mr. Laurens's resignation, and that they have made some alteration in your powers.

I send the papers, which contain the little news we have, and am, sir,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



MR. SECRETARY TOWNSHEND TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Whitehall, September 20th, 1782.

Sir,

I received on Saturday last your packets of the 10th and 11th of this month.

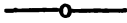
A meeting of the King's confidential servants was held as soon as possible, to consider the contents of them, and it was at once agreed to make the alteration in the commission proposed by Dr. Franklin

and Mr. Jay. I trust that the readiness with which this proposal has been accepted will be considered as an ample testimony of the openness and sincerity with which the Government of this country is disposed to treat with the Americans.

The commission is passing with as much despatch as the forms of office will allow; but I thought it material that no delay should happen, in giving you notice of the determination of his Majesty's council upon this subject. You will receive the commission very soon after this reaches you.

I am, with great regard, &c.,

T. TOWNSHEND.



RICHARD OSWALD TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, September 24th, 1782.

Sir,

Having received, by a courier just now arrived, a letter from Mr. Secretary Townshend, in answer to mine, which went by the messenger despatched from hence on the 12th, I take this opportunity of Mr. Whiteford to send you a copy of it. I hope he will bring good accounts of your health, which I sincerely wish, and am your Excellency's, &c.,

RICHARD OSWALD.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, September 24th, 1782.

Sir,

I have the honor to send you my despatches for the Chevalier de la Luzerne. The packet is voluminous, but it contains many duplicates.

I should be glad if it were in my power to inform him, that our treaty is in as good progress as yours, but this is far from being the case. I cannot even foresee what will be the issue, for difficulties multiply. It will be well for you to forewarn the Congress to be prepared for whatever event may arise. I do not despair; I the rather hope; but as yet all is uncertainty.

I have the honor to be, sir,

DE VERGENNES.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, September 26th, 1782.

Sir,

I have just received your No. 15, dated the 9th of August, which mentions your not having heard from me since March. I have, however, written sundry letters, viz: of April the 8th, and June the 12th, June the 25th and 29th, August the 12th, and September 3d, and sent copies of the same, which I hope cannot all have miscarried.

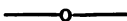
The negotiations for peace have hitherto amounted to little more than mutual professions of sincere desires, &c., being obstructed by the want of due form in the English commissions appointing their plenipotentiaries. The objections made to those for treating with France, Spain, and Holland, were first removed, and by the enclosed\* it seems that our objections to that for treating with us will now be removed also, so that we expect to begin in a few days our negotiations. But there are so many interests to be considered and settled, in a peace between five different nations, that it will be well not to flatter ourselves with a very speedy conclusion.

I mentioned in a former letter my having communicated to Count de Vergennes the state of American commerce, which you sent me, and my having urged its consideration, &c. Enclosed is a copy of a letter received from that Minister on the subject.

The copy of General Carleton's letter, and the bills of exchange, which you mentioned as enclosed, do not appear. I hope soon to have a better opportunity of writing, when I shall be fuller.

With great esteem, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, October 3d, 1782.

Sir,

I have the honor to return you the commission appointing Thomas

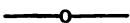
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\* This refers to Mr. Oswald's commission, which will be found in the Correspondence of the Commissioners for negotiating peace.

Barclay consul of the United States, to reside in France, and I endorse the exequatur, which is requisite for the exercise of his functions. I must inform you, that the latter of these will require the Admiral's signature previously to its being registered, either by the Secretary of the Admiralty at L'Orient, where Mr. Barclay intends to fix his residence, or by those of other ports of the kingdom, where commercial considerations may require his presence.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Bath, October 4th, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I only write one line to you, to let you know that I am not forgetful of you, or of our common concerns. I have not heard anything from the Ministry yet; I believe it is a kind of vacation with them, before the meeting of Parliament. I have told you of a proposition, which I have had some thoughts to make as a kind of copartnership in commerce. I send you a purposed temporary convention, which I have drawn up. You are to consider it only as one I recommend. The words underlined are grafted upon the proposition of my memorial, dated May 19th, 1778. You will see the principle, which I have in my thoughts to extend for the purpose of restoring our ancient copartnership generally.

I cannot tell you what event things may take, but my thoughts are always employed in endeavoring to arrange that system upon which the *China Vase*, lately shattered, may be cemented together, upon principles of compact and connexion, instead of dependence.

I have met with a sentiment in this country which gives some alarm, viz: lest the unity of government in America should be uncertain, and the States reject the authority of Congress. Some passages in General Washington's letter have given weight to these doubts. I do not hear of any tendency to this opinion; *that the American States will break to pieces, and then we may still conquer them.* I believe all that folly is extinguished. But many serious and well disposed persons are alarmed, lest *this should be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the union, and annihilating the cement of confederation,* (*vide* Washington's letter,) and that Great

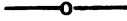
Britain should thereby lose her best and wisest hope of being reconnected with the American States *unitedly*. I should for one think it the greatest misfortune. Pray give me some opinion upon this.

You see there is likewise another turn, which may be given to this sentiment by intemperate and disappointed people, who may indulge a passionate revenge for their own disappointments, by endeavoring to excite general distrust, discord, and disunion. I wish to be prepared and guarded at all points.

I beg my best compliments to your colleagues; be so good as to show this letter to them. I beg particularly my condolence (and I hope congratulation) to Mr. Adams; I hear that he has been very dangerously ill, but that he is again recovered. I hope the latter part is true, and that we shall all survive to set our hands to some future compacts of common interest and common affection between our two countries.

Your ever affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, October 14th, 1782.

Sir,

I have but just received information of this opportunity, and have only time allowed to write a few lines.

In my last of the 26th past, I mentioned that the negociation for peace had been obstructed, by the want of due form in the English commissions appointing their plenipotentiaries. In that for treating with us, the mentioning our States by their public name had been avoided, which we objected to; another is come, of which I send a copy enclosed. We have now made several preliminary propositions which the English Minister, Mr. Oswald, has approved, and sent to his Court. He thinks they will be approved there, but I have some doubts. In a few days, however, the answer expected will determine. By the first of these articles the King of Great Britain renounces for himself and successors, all claim and pretension to dominion or territory within the Thirteen United States; and the boundaries are described as in our instructions, except that the line between Nova Scotia and New England is to be settled by Commissioners after the peace. By another article, the fishery in the

American seas is to be freely exercised by the Americans, wherever they might formerly exercise it while united with Great Britain. By another the citizens and subjects of each nation are to enjoy the same protection and privileges, in each other's ports and countries, respecting commerce, duties, &c., that are enjoyed by native subjects. The articles are drawn up very fully by Mr. Jay, who I suppose sends you a copy; if not, it will go by the next opportunity. If these articles are agreed to, I apprehend little difficulty in the rest. Something has been mentioned about the refugees and English debts, but not insisted on, as we declared at once, that whatever confiscations had been made in America being in virtue of the laws of particular States the Congress had no authority to repeal those laws, and therefore could give us none to stipulate for such repeal.

I have been honored with the receipt of your letters Nos. 14 and 15. I have also received two letters from Mr. Lewis R. Morris, both dated the 6th of July, and one dated the 10th of August, enclosing bills for . . . . . 68,290 livres.

71,380 "  
9,756 "

In all 149,426 livres,

being intended for the payment of Ministers' salaries for the two first quarters of this year. But as these bills came so late, that all those salaries were already paid, I shall make no use of the bills, but lay them by till further orders; and the salaries of different Ministers not having all the same times of falling due, as they had different commencements, I purpose to get all their accounts settled and reduced to the same period, and send you the state of them, that you may be clear in future orders. I see in one of the estimates sent me that a quarter's salary of a Minister is reckoned at 14,513 livres, in the other it is reckoned 16,667 livres, and the bill for 9,756\* livres is mentioned as intended to pay a balance due on the remittance of the 68,290 livres. Being unacquainted with the state of your exchange, I do not well comprehend this, and therefore leave the whole for the present, as I have said above. Permit me only to hint for your consideration, whether it may not be well hereafter to omit mention

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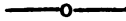
\* This was not merely to pay a balance, but an excess on account of contingencies. *Note by Mr. Livingston.*

of sterling in our appointments, since we have severed from the country to which that denomination of money is peculiar; and also to order the payment of your Ministers in such a manner that they may know exactly what they are to receive, and not be subject to the fluctuations of exchange. If it is that which occasions the difference between 14,583 for the first quarter, and the 16,667 for the second, it is considerable. I think we have no right to any advantage by the exchange, nor should we be liable to any loss from it. Hitherto we have taken 15,000 for a quarter, (subject, however, to the allowance or disallowance of Congress,) which is lower than the medium between those two extremes.

The different accounts given of Lord Shelburne's character, with respect to sincerity, induced the Ministry here to send over M. de Rayneval, Secretary to the Council, to converse with him, and endeavor to form by that means a more perfect judgment of what was to be expected from the negotiations. He was five or six days in England, saw all the Ministers, and returned quite satisfied that they are sincerely desirous of peace, so that the negotiations now go on with some prospect of success. But the Court and people of England are very changeable. A little turn of fortune in their favor sometimes turns their heads; and I shall not think a speedy peace to be depended on, till I see the treaties signed. I am obliged to finish.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO JOHN ADAMS.

Sir,

Passy, October 15th, 1782.

A long and painful illness has prevented my corresponding with your Excellency regularly.

Mr. Jay has, I believe, acquainted you with the obstructions our peace negotiations have met with, and that they are at length removed. By the next courier expected from London we may be able perhaps to form some judgment of the probability of success, so far as relates to our part of the peace. How likely the other Powers are to settle their pretensions I cannot yet learn. In the mean time, America is gradually growing more easy, by the enemy's evacuation of their posts; as you will see by some intelligence I enclose.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM T. TOWNSHEND TO B. FRANKLIN.

Whitehall, October 23d, 1782.

Sir,

As Mr. Strachey is going from hence to Paris with some particulars for Mr. Oswald, which were not easily to be explained in writing, I take the liberty of introducing him to your acquaintance, though I am not sure that he is not a little known to you. The confidential situation in which he stands with me, makes me particularly desirous of presenting him to you.

I believe, sir, I am enough known to you for you to believe me, when I say, that there has not been from the beginning a single person more averse to the unhappy war, or who wishes more earnestly than I do for a return of peace and mutual amity between Great Britain and America.

I am, with great regard, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

T. TOWNSHEND.

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TO THOMAS TOWNSHEND.

Passy, November 4th, 1782.

Sir,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Strachey, and was much pleased with the opportunity it gave me of renewing and increasing my acquaintance with a gentleman of so amiable and deserving a character.

I am sensible you have ever been averse to the measures that brought on this unhappy war; I have, therefore, no doubt of the sincerity of your wishes for a return of peace. Mine are equally earnest. Nothing, therefore, except the beginning of the war, has given me more concern than to learn at the conclusion of our conferences, that it is not likely to be soon ended. Be assured no endeavors on my part would be wanting to remove any difficulties that may have arisen, or even if a peace were made, to procure afterwards any changes in the treaty that might tend to render it more perfect, and the peace more durable. But we, who are here at so great a distance from our constituents, have not the possibility of obtaining in a few days fresh instructions, as is the case with your negotiators, and are therefore obliged to insist on what is conformable



to those we have, and at the same time appears to us just and reasonable.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, November 7th, 1782.

Sir,

The Baron de Kermelin, a Swedish gentleman of distinction, recommended strongly to me by his Excellency the Ambassador of that nation to this Court, as a person highly esteemed in his own, purposes a journey through North America, to view its natural productions, acquaint himself with its commerce, and acquire such information as may be useful to his country in the communication and connexion of interests that seem to be growing, and probably may soon become considerable between the two nations. I therefore beg leave to introduce him to you, and request that you would present him to the President of Congress, and to such other persons as you shall think may be useful to him in his views, and I recommend him earnestly to those civilities which you have a pleasure in showing to strangers of merit.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, November 9th, 1782.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Stewart informing me that he shall set out to-morrow for Paris, will be the bearer of this, and duplicates of my last letters. The want of time will prevent my sending Mr. Jay duplicates of the resolutions formerly enclosed to him, which will be the more unnecessary as you will communicate those you receive with this, if my former letters containing them have not reached him.

We are much flattered by the proposals of Sweden, and feel all the force of its Minister's observations; every new acknowledgment lays the foundation of others, and familiarizes Great Britain with the idea of acknowledging us as sovereign and independent. I feel some

pleasure, too, in thinking that you are to be the instrument of procuring us new connexions, and beg leave to remind you of another which calls upon your attention, though it seems to have been forgotten in the hurry of business. I mean that with the States of Barbary. The good dispositions of the Court of France towards us, and the enlarged policy by which their measures are actuated, together with the coolness that at present subsists between the Emperor of Morocco and Great Britain, (if we are well informed,) seem to point out this as the favorable moment for making ourselves known to him. As Mr. Jay is now with you, I wish you would consult upon the means of bringing this about, so that we may not be shut out of the Mediterranean in future.

I know you will start a very obvious objection. But as this can only be removed by your influence where you now are, we rely upon you for the means as well as for the manner of treating. I have not thought it necessary to say anything to Congress on this subject, nor shall I, till you give me hopes that something may be done in it.

The only political object of a general nature that has been touched upon in Congress since my last, is the exchange of prisoners, which seems at present to be as far as ever from being effected. The propositions on the side of the enemy were to exchange seamen for soldiers, they having no soldiers in their hands; that the soldiers so exchanged should not serve for one year against the United States; that the sailors might go into immediate service; that the remainder of the soldiers in our hands should be given up at a stipulated price.

Congress rejected this proposal as unequal; as letting loose a force which might be employed against our allies in the West Indies; as making no provision for the payment of the large balance due to us for the maintenance of prisoners. They further required that General Carleton should explicitly declare, that the powers he gives to his Commissioners for negotiating an exchange are derived from the King of Great Britain, so that any engagement for the payment of the debt they have incurred may be considered as binding upon the nation. With respect to Mr. Laurens they have come to no decided opinion; the Committee to whom it was referred reporting that,

“With respect to the information contained in the extract of Sir Guy Carleton’s and Admiral Digby’s letter of the 2d of August, *‘that after Mr. Laurens was discharged, he declared that he*

*considered Lord Cornwallis as freed from his parole,* your committee conceive it sufficient to observe, that no intimation having been received of such a fact, except from the said extract, and Congress having given no directions to that purpose, the consideration thereof would in their opinion be premature, and ought therefore to be deferred." Since which, though letters have been received from Mr. Laurens, they have come to no resolution, unless their direction to him to proceed in the business of his mission may be considered as such.

General Carleton has sent out the trial of Lippincott, which admits the murder of Huddy, but justifies Lippincott under an *irregular* order of the Board of Refugees. So paltry a palliation of so black a crime would not have been admitted, and Captain Asgill would certainly have paid the forfeit for the injustice of his countrymen, had not the interposition of their Majesties prevented. The letter from the Count de Vergennes is made the groundwork of the resolution passed on that subject. I shall transmit you the resolve.

I suppose I need not tell you, that the enemy contrived to get off the *Eagle*, and to carry her to New York. You will find in the enclosed papers a very polite letter from Captain Elphinston; it is easier to be so in word than in deed among the British. Digby has refused to permit him to comply with his engagement, at least so far as his share of the prize is concerned, and insists upon dividing the baggage of the officers, and sharing the eighth pair of breeches, &c.

On the 4th instant, Mr. Boudinot was elected President in the room of Mr. Hanson, whose term of service had expired. Mr. Lewis Morris will enclose bills purchased here at six shillings and three pence, currency, for five livres, to the amount of your last quarter's salary, ending the first of October.

I have the honor to be, sir, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

—o—

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, November 21st, 1783.

Sir,

Congress a few days since passed the enclosed resolution, No. 1, by which they have added Mr. Jefferson to the commission for conclud-

ing a peace. The established character of this gentleman gives me reason to hope that his appointment will be very acceptable to you and the other gentlemen in the commission. I have not yet learned whether he will take the task upon him, but I have reason to believe he will, the death of his wife having lessened, in the opinion of his friends, the reluctance which he has hitherto manifested to going abroad. I think it would be proper to make a formal annunciation of this resolution to the Court of France. You will naturally give such a representation of Mr. Jefferson's character as will secure to him there that esteem and confidence which he justly merits. The resolution No. 2 needs no comment; or if it does, Mr. Morris will prove the able commentator. I resign the task to him.

For what end are the show of negotiations kept up by England, when peace upon the only terms she can possibly expect to obtain it is far from her heart? Her Ministers, like some Ministers of the Gospel, who are unwilling to quit the pulpit when they have tired out their hearers, expect to keep the people together by calling out at every period, "now to conclude," while they continue the same dull tale for want of skill to wind it up.

By accounts from Jamaica, we learn that the British have recovered most of their settlements on the Bay. Some attention will, I hope, be paid in the treaty of peace to secure to us the share we formerly had in the logwood trade; it was a valuable remittance to us, and the low price at which we were enabled to sell renders it important to other nations that we should not be excluded from furnishing it as usual. You will find by the enclosed paper that Mr. Burgess, an English merchant, was not permitted to settle at Boston and obtain the rights of citizenship, upon principles which must be alarming to England. It shows at the same time the respect that is paid to the resolutions of Congress, notwithstanding all that has been said and written to prove the contrary.

I am, sir, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

P. S. I forgot to mention, that I am solicited by Mr. Barlow to transmit to you proposals for printing a work of his, which you will find described in the enclosed proposals, as they are accompanied with a specimen of his poetry, which is as much as I have seen of it. You will judge yourself how far it deserves the patronage he wishes you to give it.

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Passy, November 26th, 1782.

Sir,

You may well remember, that in the beginning of our conferences, before the other Commissioners arrived, on your mentioning to me a retribution for the Royalists, whose estates had been confiscated, I acquainted you that nothing of that kind could be stipulated by us, the confiscation being made by virtue of laws of particular States, which the Congress had no power to contravene or dispense with, and therefore could give us no such authority in our commission. And I gave it as my opinion and advice, honestly and cordially, that if a reconciliation was intended, no mention should be made in our negociations of those people; for they having done infinite mischief to our properties, by wantonly burning and destroying farm-houses, villages, and towns, if compensation for their losses were insisted on, we should certainly exhibit again such an account of all the ravages they had committed, which would necessarily recall to view scenes of barbarity that must inflame, instead of conciliating, and tend to perpetuate an enmity that we all profess a desire of extinguishing. Understanding, however, from you, that this was a point your Ministry had at heart, I wrote concerning it to Congress, and I have lately received the following resolution, viz:

*“By the United States, in Congress assembled.*

“September 10th, 1782.

*“Resolved,* That the Secretary for Foreign Affairs be, and he is hereby directed to obtain, as speedily as possible, authentic returns of the slaves and other property which have been carried off or destroyed in the course of the war by the enemy, and to transmit the same to the Ministers Plenipotentiary for negotiating peace.

*“Resolved,* That in the mean time, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs inform the said Ministers that many thousands of slaves, and other property, to a very great amount, have been carried off or destroyed by the enemy; and that in the opinion of Congress, the great loss of property which the citizens of the United States have sustained by the enemy, will be considered by the several States as an insuperable bar to their making restitution or indemnification to

the former owner of property, which has been, or may be forfeited to, or confiscated by any of the States.”

In consequence of these resolutions and circular letters of the Secretary, the Assembly of Pennsylvania, then sitting, passed the following act, viz :

*“State of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly.*

“ Wednesday, September 18th, 1782.

“ The bill, entitled ‘An act for procuring an estimate of the damages sustained by the inhabitants of Pennsylvania from the troops and adherents of the King of Great Britain during the present war,’ was read a second time.

“ Ordered to be transcribed, and printed for public consideration.

“ Extract from the minutes.

“ PETER Z. LLOYD,

*“Clerk of the General Assembly.*

“ Whereas great damages, of the most wanton nature, have been committed by the armies of the King of Great Britain, or their adherents within the territory of the United States of North America, unwarranted by the practice of civilized nations, and only to be accounted for from the vindictive spirit of the said King and his officers; and whereas an accurate account and estimate of such damages, more especially the waste and destruction of property, may be very useful to the people of the United States of America, in forming a future treaty of peace, and in the mean time, may serve to exhibit in a true light to the nations of Europe the conduct of the said King, his Ministers, officers, and adherents; to the end, therefore, that proper measures be taken to ascertain the damages aforesaid, which have been done to the citizens and inhabitants of Pennsylvania in the course of the present war within this State; be it enacted by the House of Representatives of the freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same, that in every county of this State, which has been invaded by the armies, soldiers, or adherents of the King of Great Britain, the Commissioners of every such county shall immediately meet together, each within their county, and issue directions to the assessors of the respective townships, districts, and places within such

county, to call upon the inhabitants of every township and place, to furnish accounts and estimates of the damages, waste, spoil, and destruction which have been done and committed as aforesaid, upon the property, real or personal, within the same township or place, since the first day of \_\_\_\_\_, which was in the year of our Lord 1777, and the same accounts and estimates to be transmitted to the Commissioners without delay. And if any person or persons shall refuse or neglect to make out such accounts and estimates, the said assessors of the township or place, shall, from their own knowledge, and by any other reasonable and lawful method, take and render such an account and estimate of all damage done or committed, as aforesaid; provided always, that all such accounts and estimates to be made out and transmitted as aforesaid, shall contain a narrative of the time and circumstances; and if in the power of the person aggrieved, the names of the General, or other officers or adherents of the enemy by whom the damage in any case was done, or under whose orders the army, detachment, party, or persons, committing the same, acted at that time, and also the name and condition of the person or persons whose property was so damaged or destroyed; and that all such accounts and estimates be made in current money, upon oath or affirmation of the sufferer, or of others having knowledge concerning the same; and that in every case it be set forth, whether the party injured hath received any satisfaction for his loss, and by whom the same was given.

“And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners having obtained the said accounts and estimates from the assessor of the several townships and places, shall proceed to inspect and register the same in a book, to be provided for that purpose, distinguishing the districts and townships, and entering those of each place together; and if any account and estimate be imperfect, or not sufficiently verified and established, the said Commissioners shall have power, and they, or any two of them, are hereby authorised to summon and compel any person whose evidence they shall think necessary, to appear before them at a day and place appointed, to be summoned upon oath or affirmation, concerning any damage or injury as aforesaid; and the said Commissioners shall, upon the call and demand of the President, or Vice President of the Supreme Executive Council, deliver, or send to the Secretary of the said Council, all or any of the original accounts and estimates aforesaid, and shall also

deliver or send to the said Secretary, copies of the book aforesaid, or any part or parts thereof, upon reasonable notice.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all loss of negro or mulatto slaves and servants, who have been deluded and carried away by the enemies of the United States, and who have not been recovered or recompensed, shall be comprehended within the accounts and estimates aforesaid; and that the Commissioners and assessors of any county which had not been invaded as aforesaid, shall nevertheless inquire after, and procure accounts and estimates of any damages suffered by the loss of such servants and slaves, as is hereinbefore directed as to other property.

“And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the charges and expenses of executing this act, as to the pay of the said Commissioners and assessors, shall be as in other cases; and that witnesses shall be rewarded for their loss of time and trouble, as witnesses summoned to appear in the courts of quarter sessions of the peace; and the said charges and expenses shall be defrayed by the Commonwealth; but paid, in the first instance, out of the hands of the Treasurer of the county, for county rates, and levies upon orders drawn by the Commissioners of the proper county.”

We have not yet had time to hear what has been done by the other Assemblies; but I have no doubt that similar acts will be made use of by all of them, and that the mass of evidence produced by the execution of those acts, not only of the enormities committed by those people, under the direction of the British Generals, but of those committed by the British troops themselves, will form a record that must render the British name odious in America to the latest generations. In that authentic record will be found the burning of the fine towns of Charlestown, near Boston; of Falmouth, just before winter, when the sick, the aged, the women and children, were driven to seek shelter where they could hardly find it; of Norfolk, in the midst of winter; of New London, of Fairfield, of Esopus, &c., besides near a hundred and fifty miles of well-settled country laid waste; every house and barn burnt, and many hundreds of farmers, with their wives and children, butchered and scalped.

The present British Ministers, when they reflect a little, will certainly be too equitable to suppose that their nation has a right to make an unjust war, (which they have always allowed this against



us to be,) and do all sorts of unnecessary mischief, unjustifiable by the practice of any individual people, while those they make war with are to suffer without claiming any satisfaction ; but that if Britons, or their adherents, are in return deprived of any property, it is to be restored to them, or they are to be indemnified. The British troops can never excuse their barbarities. They were unprovoked. The Loyalists may say, in excuse of theirs, that they were exasperated by the loss of their estates, and it was revenge. They have, then, had their revenge. *Is it right they should have both ?*

Some of those people may have merit in their regard for Britain, and who espoused her cause from affection ; these it may become you to reward, But there are many of them who were waverers, and were only determined to engage in it by some occasional circumstance or appearances ; these have not much of either merit or demerit ; and there are others, who have abundance of demerit respecting your country, having by their falsehoods and misrepresentations brought on and encouraged the continuance of the war ; these, instead of being recompensed, should be punished.

It is usual among Christian people at war to profess always a desire of peace ; but if the Ministers of one of the parties choose to insist particularly on a certain article, which they have known the others are not and cannot be empowered to agree to, what credit can they expect should be given to such professions ?

Your Ministers require that we should receive again into our bosom those who have been our bitterest enemies, and restore their properties who have destroyed ours, and this, while the wounds they have given us are still bleeding ! It is many years since your nation expelled the Stuarts and their adherents, and confiscated their estates. Much of your resentment against them may by this time be abated ; yet, if we should propose it, and insist on it as an article of our treaty with you, that that family should be recalled and the forfeited estates of its friends restored, would you think us serious in our professions of earnestly desiring peace ?

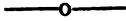
I must repeat my opinion, that it is best for you to drop all mention of the Refugees. We have proposed, indeed, nothing but what we think best for you as well as ourselves. But if you will have them mentioned, let it be in an article, in which you may provide that they shall exhibit accounts of their losses to the

Commissioners, hereafter to be appointed, who should examine the same, together with the accounts now preparing in America of the damages done by them, and state the account, and that if a balance appears in their favor, it shall be paid by us to you, and by you divided among them as you shall think proper. And if the balance is found due to us, it shall be paid by you.

Give me leave, however, to advise you to prevent the necessity of so dreadful a discussion by dropping the article, that we may write to America and stop the inquiry.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, November 27th, 1782.

Sir,

An opportunity offering from this port to write directly to you, I do not choose to hazard anything by the post, which carries this to Boston, particularly as I did not hear till just now, that a frigate was to sail from thence, and it is uncertain whether this will arrive in time to go by her. This, then, only accompanies the newspapers, which contain all the public information now in circulation.

The memorials of Messrs. La Marque and Fabru are transmitted to South Carolina, as it is a matter in which the United States are not concerned. It is to be hoped that the State will do justice to the claimants, if, as asserted, Gillon acted under authority from them. He has just left this with his ship, not in the most honorable manner, having, as I am informed, been arrested by order of the proprietor of the ship for his proportion of the prize money. The sheriff stands in the gap.

The Swiss officer mentioned in yours, I have sent to Edenton to get information about. You shall have the result of inquiries in my next.

As your grandson will probably choose to continue in the line he is in, I cannot but think he might find important advantages from opening a correspondence with this office. His diligence and accuracy in collecting and transmitting intelligence would procure him friends here. My attachment to you will render me desirous to place them in the best light.

I am, sir, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, November 29th, 1782.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency, that the Commissioners of the United States have agreed with Mr. Oswald on the preliminary articles of the peace between those States and Great Britain. To-morrow I hope we shall be able to communicate to your Excellency a copy of them.\*

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

—○—

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, December 3d, 1782.

Sir,

I have just now received the certificates required by Mr. Wallier. The vessel which carries my other despatches having been long detained, I embrace the opportunity to forward them. Nothing new since my last, except that, by a gentleman who left Charleston the 4th instant, we learn that the British had dismounted their cannon, and were certainly on the point of leaving it.

I am, sir, &amp;c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

—○—

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, December 4th, 1782.

Sir,

We detain the Washington a little longer, expecting an English passport for her in a few days; and as possibly some vessel bound for North America may sail before her, I write this line to inform you, that the French preliminaries with England are not yet signed, though we hope they may be very soon. Of ours I enclose a copy. The Dutch and Spain have yet made but little progress, and as no definitive treaty will be signed till all are agreed, there may be time for Congress to give us further instructions, if they think proper.

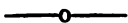
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\* These articles will be found in the Correspondence of the Commissioners.

We hope the terms we have obtained will be satisfactory, though, to secure our main points, we may have yielded too much in favor of the Royalists. The quantity of aid to be afforded us remains undecided. I suppose something depends on the event of the treaty. By the Washington you will be fully informed of every thing.

With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, December 5th, 1782.

Sir,

I am honored by your several letters, Nos. 16, 17, 18, and 19, dated September 5th, 13th, 15th, and 18th. I believe that the complaints you make in them of my not writing, may ere now have appeared less necessary, as many of my letters written before those complaints must have since come to hand. I will nevertheless mention some of the difficulties your Ministers meet with in keeping up a regular and punctual correspondence. We are far from the seaports and not well informed, and often misinformed, about the sailing of vessels. Frequently we are told they are to sail in a week or two, and often they lie in the ports for months after, with our letters on board, either waiting for convoy or for other reasons. The post office here is an unsafe conveyance; many of the letters we received by it have evidently been opened, and doubtless the same happens to those we send; and at this time particularly, there is so violent a curiosity in all kinds of people to know something relating to the negotiations, and whether peace may be expected, or a continuance of the war, that there are few private hands or travellers that we can trust with carrying our despatches to the sea-coast; and I imagine that they may sometimes be opened and destroyed because they cannot be well sealed. Again, the observation you make that the Congress Ministers in Europe seem to form themselves into a privy council, transacting affairs without the privy or concurrence of the sovereign, may be in some respects just; but it should be considered that if they do not write as frequently as other Ministers here do to their respective Courts, or if when they write, their letters are not regularly received, the greater distance of the seat of war, and the extreme irregularity of conveyances may be the causes, and not a

desire of acting without the knowledge or orders of their constituents. There is no European Court to which an express cannot be sent from Paris in ten or fifteen days, and from most of them answers may be obtained in that time. There is, I imagine, no Minister who would not think it safer to act by orders than from his own discretion ; and yet, unless you leave more to the discretion of your Ministers in Europe than Courts usually do, your affairs may sometimes suffer extremely from the distance, which in the time of war especially, may make it five or six months before the answer to a letter shall be received. I suppose the Minister from this Court will acquaint Congress with the King's sentiments, respecting a very handsome present of a ship of the line. People in general here are much pleased with it.

I communicated, together with my memoir demanding a supply of money, copies of every paragraph in your late letters, which express so strongly the necessity of it. I have been constant in my solicitations both directly and through the Marquis de la Fayette, who has employed himself diligently and warmly in the business. The negociations for peace are, I imagine, one cause of the great delay and indecision on this occasion beyond what has been usual, as the quantum may be different if those negociations do or do not succeed. We have not yet learnt what we may expect. We have been told that we shall be aided, but it cannot be to the extent demanded ; six millions have been mentioned, but not as a sum fixed. The Minister tells me still that he is working upon the subject, but cannot yet give a determinative answer. I know his good will to do the best for us that is possible.

It is in vain for me to repeat again what I have so often written, and what I find taken so little notice of, that there are bounds to everything, and that the faculties of this nation are limited like those of all other nations. Some of you seem to have established as maxims the suppositions that France has money enough for all her occasions and all ours besides ; and that if she does not supply us, it is owing to her want of will or to my negligence. As to the first, I am sure it is not true ; and to the second, I can only say I should rejoice as much as any man in being able to obtain more ; and I shall also rejoice in the greater success of those who may take my place. You desire to be very particularly acquainted with "every step which tends to negociation." I am, therefore, encouraged to send

you the first part of the journal, which accidents and a long severe illness interrupted; but which, from notes I have by me, may be continued if thought proper. In its present state it is hardly fit for the inspection of Congress, certainly not for public view. I confide it therefore to your prudence.

The arrival of Mr. Jay, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Laurens, has relieved me from much anxiety, which must have continued, if I had been left to finish the treaty alone; and it has given me the more satisfaction, as I am sure the business has profited by their assistance.

Much of the summer has been taken up in objecting against the powers given by Great Britain, and in removing those objections. The not using any expressions that might imply an acknowledgment of our independence, seemed at first industriously to be avowed; but our refusing otherwise to treat, at length induced them to get over that difficulty, and then we came to the point of making propositions. Those made by Mr. Jay and me before the arrival of the other gentlemen, you will find in the paper A, which was sent by the British Plenipotentiary to London for the King's consideration. After some weeks, an under secretary, Mr. Strachey, arrived, with whom we had much contestation about the boundaries and other articles which he proposed and we settled; some of which he carried to London, and returned with the propositions, some adopted, others omitted or altered, and new ones added, which you will see in paper B. We spent many days in disputing, and at length agreed on and signed the preliminaries, which you will see by this conveyance. The British Minister struggled hard for two points, that the favors granted to the Royalists should be extended, and all our fishery contracted. We silenced them on the first, by threatening to produce an account of the mischief done by those people; and as to the second, when they told us they could not possibly agree to it as we requested it, and must refer it to the Ministry in London, we produced a new article to be referred at the same time, with a note of facts in support of it, which you have, C.\* Apparently, it seemed, that to avoid the discussion of this, they

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\* The papers alluded to in this letter will be found in the correspondence of the Commissioners for negotiating peace.

suddenly changed their minds, dropped the design of recurring to London, and agreed to allow the fishery as demanded.

You will find in the preliminaries some inaccurate and ambiguous expressions, that want explanation, and which may be explained in the definitive treaty; and as the British Ministry excluded our proposition relating to commerce, and the American prohibition of that with England may not be understood to cease merely by our concluding a treaty of peace, perhaps we may then, if the Congress shall think fit to direct it, obtain some compensation for the injuries done us as a condition of our opening again the trade. Every one of the present British Ministry has, while in the Ministry, declared the war against us as unjust; and nothing is clearer in reason, than that those who injure others by an unjust war should make full reparation. They have stipulated, too, in these preliminaries, that in evacuating our towns, they shall carry off no plunder, which is a kind of acknowledgment that they ought not to have done it before.

The reason given us for dropping the article relating to commerce was, that some statutes were in the way, which must be repealed before a treaty of that kind could be well formed, and that this was a matter to be considered in Parliament.

They wanted to bring their boundary down to the Ohio, and to settle their loyalists in the Illinois country. We did not choose such neighbors.

We communicated all the articles, as soon as they were signed, to Count de Vergennes, (except the separate one,) who thinks we have managed well, and told me that we had settled what was most apprehended as a difficulty in the work of a general peace, by obtaining the declaration of our independency.

*December 14th.* I have this day learnt that the principal preliminaries between France and England are agreed on, to wit:

1st. France is to enjoy the right of fishing and drying on all the west coast of Newfoundland, down to Cape Ray. Miquelon and St. Pierre to be restored, and may be fortified.

2nd. Senegal remains to France, and Goree to be restored. The Gambia entirely to England.

3rd. All the places taken from France in the East Indies to be restored, with a certain quantity of territory round them.

4th. In the West Indies, Grenada and the Grenadines, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserat, to be restored to England. St. Lucia to France. Dominique to remain with France, and St. Vincent's to be neutralized.

5th. No Commissioner at Dunkirk.

The points not yet quite settled are the territory round the places in the Indies, and neutralization of St. Vincent's. Apparently these will not create much difficulty.

Holland has yet hardly done anything in her negociation.

Spain offers for Gibraltar to restore West Florida and the Bahamas. An addition is talked of the Island of Guadaloupe, which France will cede to Spain in exchange for the other half of Hispaniola, and Spain to England, but England, it is said, chose rather Porto Rico. Nothing yet concluded.

As soon as I received the commission and instructions for treating with Sweden, I waited on the Ambassador here, who told me he daily expected a courier on that subject. Yesterday he wrote a note to acquaint me that he would call on me to-day, having something to communicate to me. Being obliged to go to Paris, I waited on him, when he showed me the full powers he had just received, and I showed him mine. We agreed to meet on Wednesday next, exchange copies, and proceed to business. His commission has some polite expressions in it, to wit: "That his Majesty thought it for the good of his subjects to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States of America, who had established their independence so justly merited by their courage and constancy;" or to that effect. I imagine this treaty will be soon completed; if any difficulties should arise, I shall take the advice of my colleagues.

I thank you for the copies of Mr. Paine's letter to the Abbé Raynal, which I have distributed into good hands. The errors we see in histories of our times and affairs weaken our faith in ancient history. Mr. Hilliard d'Auberteuil has here written another history of our Revolution, which, however, he modestly calls *an essay*; and fearing that there may be errors, and wishing to have them corrected, that his second edition may be more perfect, he has brought me six sets, which he desires me to put in such hands in America as may be good enough to render him and the public that service. I send them to you for that purpose, by Captain Barney, desiring that one set



may be given to Mr. Paine, and the rest where you please. There is a quarto set in the parcel, which please to accept from me.

I have never learnt whether the box of books I sent to you, and the press to Mr. Thompson, were put on board the *Eagle* or one of the transports. If the former, perhaps you might easily purchase them at New York; if the latter, you may still receive them among the goods for Congress, now shipping by Mr. Barclay. If they are quite lost let me know it, that I may replace them.

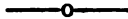
I have received several letters from your office with bills to pay Ministers' salaries. Nothing has yet been done with those bills, but I have paid Mr. Laurens 20,000 livres.

I have this day signed a common letter to you drawn up by my colleagues, which you will receive herewith. We have kept this vessel longer for two things, a passport promised us from England, and a sum to send in her; but she is likely to depart without both, being all of us impatient that Congress should receive early intelligence of our proceedings, and for the money we may probably borrow a frigate.

I am now entering on my 78th year; public business has engrossed fifty of them; I wish now to be, for the little time I have left, my own master. If I live to see this peace concluded, I shall beg leave to remind the Congress of their promise then to dismiss me. I shall be happy to sing with old Simeon, *Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, December 15th, 1782.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency, that our courier is to set out to-morrow at ten o'clock, with the despatches we send to Congress by the *Washington*, Captain Barney, for which ship we have got a passport from the King of England.\* If you would make

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\* *Copy of a Passport given to the Ship Washington, to carry over the Preliminary Articles.*

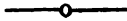
GEORGE the Third, by the Grace of God King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and so forth. To all Admirals, Vice Admirals,

any use of this conveyance, the courier shall wait upon you to-morrow at Versailles, and receive your orders.

I hoped I might have been able to send part of the aids we have asked by this safe vessel. I beg that your Excellency would at least inform me what expectations I may give in my letters. I fear the Congress will be reduced to despair, when they find that nothing is yet obtained.

With the greatest and most sincere respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, December 15th, 1782.

Sir,

I cannot but be surprised, sir, that after the explanation I have had with you, and the promise you gave, that you would not press the application for an English passport for the sailing of the packet *Washington*, that you now inform me you have received the passport, and that at ten o'clock to-morrow morning your courier will set out to carry your despatches. I am at a loss, sir, to explain your conduct and that of your colleagues on this occasion. You have concluded your preliminary articles without any communication between us, although the instructions from Congress prescribe that nothing shall be done without the participation of the King. You are about to hold out a certain hope of peace to America, without even informing yourself on the state of the negotiation on our part.

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Captains, Commanders of our ships of war or privateers, Governors of our forts and castles, custom-house comptrollers, searchers, &c., to all and singular our officers and military and loving subjects whom it may concern, greeting. Our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby strictly charge and require you, as we do likewise pray and desire the officers and Ministers of all Princes and States in amity with us, to permit and suffer the vessel called the *Washington*, commanded by Mr. Joshua Barney, belonging to the United States of North America, to sail from either of the ports of France, to any port or place in North America, without any let, hindrance, or molestation whatsoever; but on the contrary, affording the said vessel all such aid and assistance as may be necessary.

Given at our Court of St. James, the tenth day of December, 1782, in the 23d year of our reign. By his Majesty's command.

T. TOWNSHEND.

You are wise and discreet, sir; you perfectly understand what is due to propriety; you have all your life performed your duties. I pray you to consider how you propose to fulfil those which are due to the King? I am not desirous of enlarging these reflections; I commit them to your own integrity. When you shall be pleased to relieve my uncertainty I will entreat the King to enable me to answer your demands.

I have the honor to be, sir, with sincere regard, your very humble and obedient servant,

DE VERGENNES.



TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, December 17th, 1783.

Sir,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me on the 15th instant. The proposal of having a passport from England was agreed to by me the more willingly, as I at that time had hopes of obtaining some money to send in the *Washington*, and the passport would have made its transportation safer, with that of our despatches, and of yours also if you had thought fit to make use of the occasion. Your Excellency objected, as I understood it, that the English Ministers, by their letters sent in the same ship, might convey inconvenient expectations into America. It was therefore I proposed not to press for the passport till your preliminaries were also agreed to. They have sent the passport without being pressed to do it, and they have sent no letters to go under it, and ours will prevent the inconvenience apprehended. In a subsequent conversation your Excellency mentioned your intention of sending some of the King's cutters, whence I imagined that detaining the *Washington* was no longer necessary; and it was certainly incumbent on us to give Congress as early an account as possible of our proceedings, who will think it extremely strange to hear of them by other means, without a line from us. I acquainted your Excellency, however, with our intention of despatching that ship, supposing you might possibly have something to send by her.

Nothing has been agreed in the preliminaries contrary to the interests of France; and no peace is to take place between us and England, till you have concluded yours. Your observation is,

however, apparently just, that in not consulting you before they were signed, we have been guilty of neglecting a point of *bienséance*. But as this was not from want of respect to the King, whom we all love and honor, we hope it will be excused, and that the great work, which has hitherto been so happily conducted, is so nearly brought to perfection, and is so glorious to his reign, will not be ruined by a single indiscretion of ours. And certainly the whole edifice sinks to the ground immediately, if you refuse on that account to give us any further assistance.

We have not yet despatched the ship, and I beg leave to wait upon you on Friday for an answer.

It is not possible for any one to be more sensible than I am, of what I and every American owe to the King, for the many and great benefits and favors he has bestowed upon us. All my letters to America are proofs of this; all tending to make the same impressions on the minds of my countrymen, that I felt in my own. And I believe that no Prince was ever more beloved and respected by his own subjects, than the King is by the people of the United States. *The English, I just now learn, flatter themselves they have already divided us.* I hope this little misunderstanding will therefore be kept a secret, and that they will find themselves totally mistaken.

With great and sincere respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, December 24th, 1782.

Sir,

Sundry circumstances occurring since mine of the 5th and 14th, have hitherto retarded the departure of our despatches. They will now go under the security of a British passport, be accompanied by a sum of money, and by some further intelligence from England, which shows the still unsettled state of minds there, and together with the difficulties and small progress in the Dutch and Spanish negociations makes the speedy conclusion of peace still uncertain.

The Swedish Ambassador has exchanged full powers with me. I send a copy of his herewith. We have had some conferences on the proposed plan of our treaty, and he has despatched a courier for further instructions respecting some of the articles.

The Commissioners have joined in a letter to you, recommending the consideration of a proposal from Mr. Bridgen, relating to copper coin. With this you have a copy of that proposal, and a sample of the copper. If it should be accepted, I conceive the weight and value of the pieces (charge of coinage deducted) should be such that they be aliquot parts of a Spanish dollar. By the copy enclosed, of an old letter of mine to Mr. Bridgen, you will see the ideas I had of the additional utility such a coinage might be of, in communicating instruction.\*

*December 25th.* Enclosed is a copy of a letter just received from the Count de Vergennes, upon the present state of negociation with England.†

With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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*Powers of the Swedish Ambassador to treat.*

Translation.

Gustavus, by the Grace of God King of Sweden, of the Goths and Vandals, &c., &c., &c., Heir of Norway, Duke of Sleswick-Holstein, of Stormaria, and of Ditmarsen, Count of Oldenburgh and of Delmenhorst, &c., &c., makes known, that the United States of North America, viz: New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Counties of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, on the Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, having obtained the fruit of their courage and constancy, and their independence being duly and solidly acknowledged and established, We, in consequence of our desire to concur with them in the establishment of certain fixed rules, by which a reciprocal and advantageous commerce may be carried on between Sweden and North America, which may be permanent between the two nations, have nominated, constituted, and appointed, and by these presents do nominate, constitute, and appoint our very dear and well beloved Count

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\* See this letter, page 77.

† This refers to a letter, which has been already printed. See p. 379.

Gustavus Philip de Creutz, our Ambassador Extraordinary at the Court of France, Knight and Commander of our Orders, and we give him full powers to confer with whomsoever the United States shall have furnished with their powers in due form, to agree on, conclude, and sign such treaty of amity and commerce between us and the said United States, as shall be reciprocally advantageous to our subjects, promising, on our word of a King, to agree to every thing that our said Ambassador shall stipulate, promise, and sign in virtue of the present power, as likewise to make out the ratifications in proper form, and to deliver them to be exchanged at such time as shall be agreed on by the treaty so to do. In faith of which, we have signed these presents with our own hand, and have caused our royal seal to be thereunto affixed.

GUSTAVUS,  
COUNT ULR. SCHEFFER.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, January 2d, 1783.

Sir,

I was honored with your letters by the Danæ. I congratulate you upon the promising state of our negotiations, since peace begins to be no less desirable here than elsewhere.

But I will not enter into that subject at present, as I mean to write very fully both to Mr. Jay and you by Mr. Jefferson, who will sail in company with this frigate in the Romulus, a ship of forty-four guns. Lest, however, any accident should happen to prevent his arriving so soon as the Emerald, I enclose a resolution of Congress, which was suggested by the proposition you mention to have been made to Mr. Oswald on the subject of commerce. For my own part I presume that it is already included in your propositions; but as we have yet been favored only with that short note of them, which has been transmitted by you, we can form no accurate judgment on the subject. You can hardly conceive the embarrassments that the want of more minute details subjects us to.

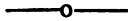
You will learn from Count de Rochambeau, that the French army sailed the 24th ultimo. Perhaps it were to be wished that they had remained here, at least till New York and Charleston were evacuated, or rather till the peace. Congress have, however, given

them a good word at parting, as you will see by the enclosed resolves. Not being consulted, they could interpose no objections to their departure, though they were not without many reasons for wishing to detain them.

Our finances are still in great distress. If the war continues, a foreign loan in addition to those already received will be essential. A plan for ascertaining what shall be called contingent expenses, is under the consideration of Congress, as well as the objections you have stated with respect to the mode of paying your salaries, which will, I believe, be altered. The allowance to Mr. Franklin has been confirmed, and your moderation and his upon this point have done you both honor in the opinion of Congress.

I have the honor to be, sir, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, January 6th, 1783.

Sir,

I have before me your letters of the 25th and 29th of June, 12th of August, 3d and 26th of September, and 14th of October last. Several matters contained in them have already been answered, and some others I am unable to reply to, till Congress have decided on such propositions as I have submitted to their consideration.

The convention relative to consuls has been objected to by Mr. Barclay, on account of its prohibiting the consuls from trading. As the funds of Congress leave them no means of affording an adequate support to persons who are qualified, they fear that the only inducement to accept the appointment will be taken away by this prohibition. Mr. Barclay's letter on that subject is under consideration.

I see the force of your objections to soliciting the additional twelve millions, and I feel very sensibly the weight of our obligations to France, but every sentiment of this kind must give way to our necessities. It is not for the interest of our allies to lose the benefit of all they have done, by refusing to make a small addition to it, or at least to see the return that our commerce will make them suspended by new convulsions in this country. The army have chosen

committees ; a very respectable one is now with Congress. They demand with importunity their arrears of pay. The Treasury is empty, and no adequate means of filling it presents itself. The people pant for peace ; should contributions be exacted, as they have heretofore been, at the point of the sword, the consequences may be more dreadful than is at present apprehended. I do not pretend to justify the negligence of the States in not providing greater supplies. Some of them might do more than they have done ; none of them all that is required. It is my duty to confide to you, that if the war is continued in this country, it must be in a great measure at the expense of France. If peace is made, a loan will be absolutely necessary to enable us to discharge the army, that will not easily separate without pay. I am sorry that neither Mr. Jay nor you sent the propositions at large, as you have made them, since we differ in opinion about the construction to be put on your commercial article, as you will find by a resolution enclosed in my letter.

I wish the concession made of our trade may be no conditions of similar privileges on the part of Great Britain. You will see that without this precaution, every ally that we have, that is to be treated as the most favored nation, may be entitled to the same privileges, even though they do not purchase them by a reciprocal grant.

As to confiscated property, it is at present in such a state that the restoration of it is impossible. English debts have not, that I know of, been forfeited, unless it be in one State, and I should be extremely sorry to see so little integrity in my countrymen, as to render the idea of withholding them a general one ; however, it would be well to say nothing about them, if it can conveniently be done.

I am more and more convinced, that every means in your power must be used to secure the fisheries. They are essential to some States, and we cannot but hate the nation that keeps us from using this common favor of Providence. It was one of the direct objects for carrying on the war. While I am upon this subject, I cannot but express my hope, that every means will be used to guard against any mistrusts or jealousies between you and France. The United States have shown their confidence in her by their instructions. She has repeatedly promised to procure for us *all we ask*, as far as it lies



in her power. Let our conduct leave her without apology, if she acts otherwise, which I am far from suspecting.

With respect to the seamen you mention, I wish, if any further order is necessary than that which Mr. Barclay already has, that you would give it so far as to enable him to state their accounts, and transmit them to Mr. Morris. As the treaty with Holland is concluded, I hope you have made some progress in that with Sweden, a plan of which has been transmitted; another copy will go by Mr. Jefferson.

I am glad to find you have some prospect of obtaining what is due on the Bon Homme Richard's prize money. That matter has been much spoken of, and occasioned some reflection, as it is alleged that M. Chaumont was imposed on the officers as their agent by the court, and of course they should be answerable for his conduct, which certainly had been very exceptionable.

Congress have come to no determination as to the size or expense of the pillar they propose to erect at Yorktown. What I wished of you was to send me one or two plans, with estimates of the expense, in order to take their sense thereon.

As to the designs of Spain, they are pretty well known, and Mr. Jay and Congress concur so exactly in sentiment with respect to them, that I hope that we have now nothing to fear from that quarter.

Congress have it now under consideration to determine what should be allowed as contingent expenses. I believe house-rent will not be allowed as such. I mentioned in my last what respected your grandson, to which I have nothing to add. I agree with you in sentiment, that your salaries should not depend on the fluctuations of the exchange, and have submitted that part of your letter to Congress. I believe they will direct a stated sum to be paid. Waiting for this determination, I am prevented from drawing bills at this time. As to the money received from me, you will be pleased to replace with it the two quarters' salary you had drawn before it came to hand. You will have bills for a third quarter, which have been sent on some time since.

Several important political events have taken place here lately. The evacuation of Charleston, the sailing of the French fleet and the army, the decision of the great cause between Connecticut and Pennsylvania in favor of the latter, the state of the army, &c., all of

which I should enlarge upon if this was not to be delivered by Mr. Jefferson, who will be able to inform you fully on these points, and many others that you will deem important to a right knowledge of the present state of this country.\*

I enclose a state of the trade between these States and the West Indies, as brought in by a Committee of Congress, and referred to me. It may possibly afford you some hints, and will serve to show how earnestly we wish to have this market opened to us.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

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TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Passy, January 14th, 1783.

Sir,

I am much obliged by your information of your intended trip to England; I heartily wish you a good journey and a speedy return, and request your kind care of a packet for Mr. Hodgson.

I enclose two papers that were read at different times by me to the Commissioners; they serve to show, if you should have occasion, what was urged on the part of America on certain points; or may help to refresh your memory. I send you also another paper, which I once read to you separately. It contains a proposition for improving the law of nations, by prohibiting the plundering of unarmed and usefully employed people. I rather wish than expect that it will be adopted. But I think it may be offered with a better grace by a country that is likely to suffer least and gain most by continuing the ancient practice, which is our case, as the American ships, laden only with the gross productions of the earth, cannot be so valuable as yours, filled with sugars or with manufactures. It has not yet been considered by my colleagues; but if you should think or find that it might be acceptable on your side, I would try to get it inserted in the general treaty. I think it will do honor to the nations that establish it.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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\* Mr. Jefferson did not go, as was here expected. See his reasons in his *Memoir, Correspondence, &c.* Vol. I., p. 41.

*Propositions relative to Privateering, communicated to Mr. Oswald.*

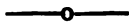
It is for the interest of humanity in general that the occasions of war, and the inducements to it, should be diminished.

If rapine is abolished, one of the encouragements to war is taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

The practice of robbing merchants on the high seas, a remnant of the ancient piracy, though it may be accidentally beneficial to particular persons, is far from being profitable to all engaged in it, or to the nation that authorizes it. In the beginning of a war, some rich ships, not upon their guard, are surprised and taken. This encourages the first adventurers to fit out more armed vessels, and many others do the same. But the enemy at the same time become more careful, arm their merchant ships better, and render them not so easy to be taken; they go also more under protection of convoys; thus while the privateers to take them are multiplied, the vessels subject to be taken, and the chances of profit, are diminished, so that many cruises are made wherein the expenses overgo the gains; and as in the case in other lotteries, though particulars have got prizes, the mass of adventurers are losers, the whole expense of fitting out all the privateers during a war being much greater than the whole amount of goods taken. Then there is the national loss of all the labor of so many men during the time they have been employed in robbing; who, besides, spend what they get in riot, drunkenness, and debauchery, lose their habits of industry, are rarely fit for any sober business after a peace, and serve only to increase the number of highwaymen and house-breakers. Even the undertakers who have been fortunate are by sudden wealth led into expensive living, the habit of which continues when the means of supporting it ceases, and finally ruins them; a just punishment for their having wantonly and unfeelingly ruined many honest innocent traders and their families, whose subsistence was employed in serving the common interests of mankind.

Should it be agreed and become a part of the law of nations, that the cultivators of the earth are not to be molested or interrupted in their peaceable and useful employment, the inhabitants of the sugar islands would perhaps come under the protection of such a regulation, which would be a great advantage to the nations who at present hold those islands, since the cost of sugar to the consumer in those nations

consists not merely in the price he pays for it by the pound, but in the accumulated charge of all the taxes he pays in every war, to fit out fleets and maintain troops for the defence of the islands that raise the sugar, and the ships that bring it home. But the expense of treasure is not all. A celebrated philosophical writer remarks, that when he considered the wars made in Africa for prisoners to raise sugar in America, the numbers slain in those wars, the numbers that, being crowded in ships, perish in the transportation, and the numbers that die under the severities of slavery, he could scarce look on a morsel of sugar without conceiving it spotted with human blood. If he had considered also the blood of one another, which the white nations shed in fighting for those islands, he would have imagined his sugar not as spotted only, but as thoroughly dyed red. On these accounts I am persuaded that the subjects of the Emperor of Germany, and the Empress of Russia, who have no sugar islands, consume sugar cheaper at Vienna and Moscow, with all the charge of transporting it after its arrival in Europe, than the citizens of London or of Paris. And I sincerely believe, that if France and England were to decide, by throwing dice, which should have the whole of their sugar islands, the loser in the throw would be the gainer. The future expense of defending them would be saved ; the sugars would be bought cheaper by all Europe, if the inhabitants might make it without interruption ; and whoever imported the sugar, the same revenue might be raised by duties at the custom-houses of the nation that consumed it. And, on the whole, I conceive it would be better for the nations now possessing sugar colonies to give up their claim to them, let them govern themselves, and put them under the protection of all the Powers of Europe as neutral countries, open to the commerce of all, the profits of the present monopolies being by no means equivalent to the expense of maintaining them.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, January 18th, 1783.

Sir,

It is essential that I should have the honor of conferring with you, Mr. Adams, and your other colleagues, who are in Paris. I therefore

pray you to invite these gentlemen to come out to Versailles with you on Monday, before ten o'clock in the morning. It will be well, also, if you will bring your grandson. It will be necessary for much writing and translating from English into French to be done. The object for which I ask this interview is very interesting to the United States.

I have the honor to be, sir,

DE VERGENNES.

—o—

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, January 18th, 1783.

Sir,

Agreeably to the notice just received from your Excellency, I shall acquaint Mr. Adams with your desire to see us on Monday before ten o'clock, at Versailles; and we shall endeavor to be punctual. My other colleagues are absent; Mr. Laurens being gone to Bath, in England, to recover his health, and Mr. Jay into Normandy. I shall bring my grandson as you direct.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, January 18th, 1783.

My dearest Sir,

I cannot but in the most earnest manner, and from recent circumstances, press your going early to Versailles to-morrow; and I have considerable reason to think that your appearance there will not displease the person whom you address. I am of opinion that it is very likely that you will have the glory of having concluded the peace by this visit; at least I am sure if the deliberations of to-morrow evening end unfavorably, that there is the strongest appearance of war; if they end favorably, perhaps little difficulty may attend the rest.

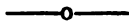
After all, the peace will have as much that is conceded in it as England can in any shape be made just now to relish, owing to the stubborn demands, principally of Spain, who would not, I believe, upon any motive recede from her conquests. What I wrote about

Gibraltar arrived after the subject, as I understand, was canvassed, and when it of course must have appeared impolitic eagerly and immediately to revive it.

You reproved me, or rather reproved a political scheme yesterday, of which I have heard more said favorably by your friends at Paris than by any persons whatever in London. But do you, my dear sir, make this peace, and trust our common sense respecting another war. England, said a man of sense to me the other day, will come out of the war like a convalescent out of disease, and must be reestablished by some physic and much regimen. I cannot easily tell in what shape a bankruptcy would come upon England, and still less easily in what mode and degree it would affect us; but if your Confederacy mean to bankrupt us now, I am sure we shall lose the great fear that would deter us from another war. Your allies, therefore, for policy and humanity's sake, will, I hope, stop short of this extremity; especially as we should do some mischief to others, as well as to ourselves.

I am, my dearest sir, your devoted, ever affectionate, and ever obliged,

B. VAUGHAN.



TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, January 19th, 1783.

Sir,

Late last night I received a note from Count de Vergennes, acquainting me that it is very essential he should have a conference with us, and requesting that I would inform my colleagues. He desires that we may be with him before ten on Monday morning. If it will suit you to call here, we may go together in my carriage. We should be on the road by eight o'clock.

With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, January 21st, 1783.

Sir,

I have just received your letters of November 9th and December

3d. This is to inform you, and to request you to inform Congress, that the preliminaries of peace between France, Spain, and England, were yesterday signed, and a cessation of arms agreed to by the Ministers of those Powers, and by us in behalf of the United States, of which act, so far as relates to us, I enclose a copy. I have not yet obtained a copy of the preliminaries agreed to by the three Crowns, but hear, in general, that they are very advantageous to France and Spain. I shall be able, in a day or two, to write more fully and perfectly. Holland was not ready to sign preliminaries, but their principal points are settled. Mr. Laurens is absent at Bath, and Mr. Jay in Normandy, for their healths, but will both be here to assist in forming the definitive treaty. I congratulate you and our country on the happy prospects afforded us by the finishing so speedily this glorious Revolution, and am, with great esteem, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

JOHN JAY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, January 26th, 1783.

Sir,

It having been suspected that I concurred in the appointment of your grandson to the place of Secretary to the American commission for peace *at your instance*, I think it right, thus unsolicited, to put it in your power to correct the mistake.

Your general character, the opinion I had long entertained of your services to our country, and the friendly attention and aid with which you had constantly favored me after my arrival in Spain, impressed me with a desire of manifesting both my esteem and attachment by stronger evidence than professions. That desire extended my regard for you to your grandson. He was then indeed a stranger to me; but the terms in which you expressed to Congress your opinion of his being qualified for another place of equal importance, were so full and satisfactory, as to leave me no room to doubt of his being qualified for the one above-mentioned. I was, therefore, happy to assure you, in one of the first letters I afterwards wrote you from Spain, that in case a secretary to our commission for peace should become necessary, and the appointment be left to us, I should take that opportunity of evincing my regard for you by nominating him,

or words to that effect. What I then wrote was the spontaneous suggestion of my own mind, unsolicited, and I believe unexpected by you.

When I came here on the business of that commission I brought with me the same intentions, and should always have considered myself engaged by honor as well as inclination to fulfil them, unless I had found myself mistaken in the opinion I had imbibed of that young gentleman's character and qualifications; but that not being the case, I found myself at liberty to indulge my wishes, and be as good as my word. For I expressly declare that your grandson is, in my opinion, qualified for the place in question, and that if he had not been, no consideration would have prevailed upon me to propose or join in his appointment.

This explicit and unreserved statement of facts is due to you, to him, and to justice, and you have my consent to make any use of it that you may think proper.

I have the honor to be, sir, with great respect,

JOHN JAY.

—o—

FROM M. ROSECRONE, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN DENMARK,  
TO M. DE WALTERSTORFF.

Translation.

Copenhagen, February 22d, 1783.

Sir,

As I know you are on the point of making a tour to France, I cannot omit warmly recommending to you to endeavor, during your stay at Paris, to gain as much as possible the confidence and esteem of Mr. Franklin.

You will recollect, sir, what I said to you in our conversations, of the high respect which all the King's Ministry have for that Minister. You have witnessed the satisfaction with which we have learned the glorious issue of this war for the United States of America, and how fully we are persuaded that it will be for the general interest of the two States to form, as soon as possible, reciprocal connexions of friendship and commerce. Nothing, certainly would be more agreeable to us than to learn by your letters that you find the same dispositions in Mr. Franklin; and in that case it seems to me the



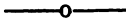
shortest way of accelerating these new connexions would be to take the treaty between the Congress and the States General for the basis, and that Mr. Franklin should communicate to us his ideas on the changes or additions which he might think reciprocally useful in the treaty of commerce which Congress might conclude with us.

We should eagerly and frankly reply to such overtures; and as soon as the changes thus agreed on shall have met the approbation of Congress, one of the persons commissioned by that body, then in Europe, might, in order to gain time, come here with full powers to conclude, leaving on both sides the most particular stipulations for the negociations of the Ministers which those States shall, in the sequel, send to reside with each other.

I shall finish, sir, with hoping that you may happily terminate the visits you have proposed to make to the different parts of France; and it is with sentiments of the most distinguished respect, that

I have the honor to be, &c.,

ROSENCRONE.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, March 7th, 1783.

Sir,

I but this moment hear of this opportunity by which I can only send you a line to acquaint you that I have concluded the treaty with Sweden, which was signed on Wednesday last. You will have a copy by the first good opportunity. It differs very little from the plan sent me; in nothing material.\* The English Court is in confusion by another change of Ministry, Lord Shelburne and his friends having resigned; but it is not yet certainly known who will succeed, though Lord North and Mr. Fox are talked of as two, they being reconciled!! I cannot add, but that I am, with great esteem, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. The change in the Ministry is not supposed of any importance respecting our definitive treaty, which must conform to the preliminaries; but we shall see.

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\* This treaty is printed in the public *Journals of Congress*, vol. 4, p. 241, under the date of July 29th, 1783.

DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, March 12th, 1783.

My dear Friend,

It is a long while since I have heard from you, or indeed since I wrote to you. I heartily congratulate you on those pacific events which have already happened, and I wish to see all other final steps of conciliation succeed speedily. I send you copies of two papers, which I have already communicated to Mr. Laurens; the one called *Conciliatory Propositions, in March, 1783*; the other *A Sketch of a Provisional Treaty of Commerce for opening the Ports between Great Britain and the United States of America without delay*; to each of which is prefixed a short state of the argument on each head.

As for the news of this country, you have doubtless heard that Lord Shelburne's administration has for some time been considered as at an end, although no other has been as yet substituted in the place of it. It was understood yesterday, and I believe with good foundation, that what is now called the Portland party have been applied to, and they are now considered as the party most likely to succeed. As far as my wishes go, such an event would be most satisfactory to me. I have known the Duke of Portland for many years, and by experience I know him to be a nobleman of the strictest honor, and of the soundest Whig principles, sincere and explicit in every thought and transaction, manly in his judgment, and firm in his conduct. The kingdom of Ireland, of which he was lately Lord Lieutenant, bears unanimous testimony to this character of him. The Cavendish family, (a good Whig name) Mr. Fox, Lord Fitzwilliam, &c., &c., form the core of his system and connexions. I most earnestly wish to see a firm administration upon a Whig foundation, which I should consider as a solid basis, on the part of this country, for a perpetual correspondence of amity and conciliation with America. I am very anxious to hear of your health. God bless you.

Ever your most affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

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*Conciliatory Propositions, March, 1783.*

Terms of peace having been agreed upon between Great Britain

and France, on the 20th of January, 1783, there need not be any further delay in proceeding to conclude the proposed treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America, upon the basis of the provisional articles of the 30th of November, 1782.

It is to be observed, that none of the articles of the provisional treaty are to take effect until the conclusion of the definitive treaty with America, at which time likewise all places in the American States, in possession of the British arms, are to be evacuated, and the British army withdrawn from the United States, (by Article 7.) If, therefore, it should be wished on the part of Great Britain to bring forward the fifth article respecting the loyalists, before the conclusion of the definitive treaty with America, the bayonet should be withdrawn from the American breast by the voluntary removal of the British troops with all convenient despatch. This condition of the removal of the troops is likewise necessary, before any provisional terms of commerce with America can take place.

By the sixth article of the provisional treaty, all future confiscations in America are precluded, although the prosecutions at present subsisting are not to be stopped before the definitive treaty. But if the substantial pledge of returning amity on the part of Great Britain, viz: the removal of the troops, should be voluntarily anticipated, it would be but reasonable that all prosecutions should be immediately abated on the part of America; and to facilitate the removal of the troops, the loyalists may be permitted to remain in safety and unmolested (if they choose to remain) from the period of removing the troops until twelve months after the definitive treaty.

There is another article of the provisional treaty, the delay of which is much to be lamented, viz: the mutual release of prisoners of war on both sides. As this is an article of reciprocity, both sides from principles of humanity are equally interested to bring it forward into effect speedily, that those unhappy captives may not alone suffer the miseries of war in the time of peace.

Upon these considerations, the following supplemental terms of a treaty between Great Britain and the United States are proposed:

1. That the British troops shall be withdrawn with all convenient speed.
2. That the Commissioners on both sides do proceed to the conclusion of a definitive treaty.
3. That the Commissioners do speedily negotiate a provisional

convention of commerce (hereunto annexed) to take place immediately; the terms of this temporary convention not to be pleaded on either side in the negotiation of final and perpetual treaty of commerce between Great Britain and the United States.

4. That the Commissioners do negotiate a perpetual treaty of commerce.

5. That all prosecutions of the loyalists in America be immediately abated, and that they be permitted to remain until twelve months after the definitive treaty, unmolested in their endeavors to obtain restitution of their estates.

6. That all prisoners on both sides be immediately released.

7. That intercourse of amity and commerce do immediately take place between Great Britain and the United States of America.

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*Sketch of a Provisional Treaty of Commerce.*

As soon as preliminaries of peace are signed with any independent States, such as Spain, France, and Holland, the course of mutual commerce emerges upon the same terms and conditions as were existing antecedent to the war, the new duties imposed during the war excepted. The case between Great Britain and America is different, because America, from a dependent nation before the war, emerges an independent nation after the war. The basis, therefore, of a provisional treaty between Great Britain and the United States would be simply to arrange such points as would emerge after the war, impracticable and discordant to the newly-established independence of the American States, and to leave all others as much as possible untouched. For instance, that all instrumental regulations, such as papers, bonds, certificates, oaths, and all other documents, should be, between Great Britain and the United States, upon the same footing, and no other than as between Great Britain and any independent nation, but that all duties, drawbacks, bounties, rights, privileges, and all pecuniary considerations, should emerge into action and effect as before. I say emerge as before, not stipulated for any fixed term, because I am speaking of a provisional *treaty*, not of a provisional *bill* of commerce, for a specified period. By this means, all difficulties, which otherwise would be accumulated,

and obstruct a temporary and provisional act, are avoided *in limine*. The ports will be immediately opened upon specified and known conditions. If the Legislature of either country thinks proper to introduce on its own part any new conditions or regulations, even previous to the intended treaty of commerce, that will not shut the ports again generally, but only operate *pro tanto* according to the case, on which side soever any novel condition should arise, the other will likewise be at liberty to make any corresponding regulations as between independent nations. The great object is to open the ports between Great Britain and the United States immediately on the signature of preliminaries of peace as between France and Great Britain. By the proposition above stated, Great Britain and France, and Great Britain and the United States, respectively, on the subject of intercourse of commerce, would emerge again after the war into situations relatively similar to their situation before the war.

The Crown of Great Britain is enabled by the Conciliatory Act of 1782 to repeal, annul, make void, or suspend, for any time or times, the operation and effect of any act of Parliament, or any clause, provision, matter, or thing therein contained, relating to the Colonies or Plantations now become the United States of America; and, therefore, the Crown is not only competent to conclude, but likewise to carry into effect any provisional treaty of commerce with America. The first foundation must be laid in the total repeal of the Prohibitory Act of December, 1775, not only as prohibiting commerce between Great Britain and the United States, but as the corner stone of the war; by giving up universally all American property at sea to military plunder, without any redress to be obtained by law in any British Court of Admiralty. After this, all obstructions from the act of navigation and other acts regulating the commerce of the States of America (formerly dependent upon Great Britain) may be removed. Instructions may be sent to the Commissioners of the customs to dispense with bonds, certificates, &c., which by the old laws are required to be discharged or attested by supposed governors, naval or custom-house officers in America. The questions of drawbacks, bounties, &c., after opening the ports, may remain free points of discussions and regulation, as between States having no commercial treaty subsisting between them. As the Crown is

competent to open an intercourse of commerce with America by treaty, this mode is preferable to any act of Parliament, which may be only a jealous and suspicious convention *ex parte*. This mode by treaty avoids the accumulated difficulties which might otherwise obstruct the first opening of the ports by act of Parliament, and above all, it secures an alternate binding part of the bargain, which no act of Parliament can do.

Breviate of the treaty, viz: Provisional for intercourse and commerce between Great Britain and the United States of America.

1. That all ports shall be mutually open for intercourse and commerce.

2. And therefore the King of Great Britain agrees to the repeal of the prohibitory acts, viz: 16 Geo. 3, chap. 5, &c. The King of Great Britain likewise agrees by instructions, according to the laws of Great Britain, to his commissioners of customs and other officers, to remove all obstructions to American ships either entering inwards or clearing outwards, which may arise from any acts of Parliament heretofore regulating the commerce of the American States, under the description of British Colonies or Plantations, so as to accommodate every circumstance to the reception of their ships, as the ships of independent States.

3. All duties, drawbacks, bounties, rights, privileges, and all other money considerations shall remain, respecting the United States of America, upon the same footing as they now remain respecting the province of Nova Scotia in America, or as if the aforesaid States had remained dependent upon Great Britain. All this subject to regulations or alterations by any future acts of the Parliament of Great Britain.

4. On the part of the States of America, it is agreed that all laws prohibiting the commerce of Great Britain shall be repealed.

5. Agreed upon the same part, that all ships and merchandize of the British dominions shall be admitted upon the same terms as before the war, except any imposts laid during the war. All this subject to future regulations or alterations by the Legislatures of the American States respectively.

6. The principles and spirit of this treaty to be supported on either side by any necessary supplemental arrangements. No tacit compliance on the part of America in any subordinate points to be argued at any time hereafter to the prejudice of their independence.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, March 23d, 1783.

Dear Sir,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me, requesting a recommendation to America of Mr. Joshua Grigby. I have accordingly written one, and having an opportunity the other day, I sent it under cover to Mr. Benjamin Vaughan. The general proclamations you wished for, suspending, or rather putting an end to hostilities, are now published; so that your "heart is at rest," and mine with it. You may depend on my joining my hearty endeavors with yours, in "cultivating conciliatory principles between our two countries;" and I may venture to assure you, that if your bill for a provisional establishment of the commerce had passed as at first proposed, a stipulation on our part in the definitive treaty to allow reciprocal and equal advantages and privileges to your subjects would have been readily agreed to.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, ever, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, March 26th, 1783.

Sir,

I need hardly tell you, that the intelligence brought by the Washington diffused a general pleasure. We had long been in suspense with respect to the negociations, and had received no other lights on that subject than those the speech of his Britannic Majesty and Mr. Townshend's letters threw upon it. These were by no means sufficient to dissipate all our apprehensions.

The terms you have obtained for us comprise most of the objects we wish for. I am sorry, however, that you found it necessary to act with reserve, and to conceal your measures from the Court of France. I am fearful that you will not be able to produce such facts as will justify this conduct to the world, or free us from the charge of ingratitude to a friend, who has treated us not only justly but generously.

But this is a disagreeable subject, and I refer you for my sentiments, and those of Congress, to my letter in answer to the joint

letter from our Ministers. I am sorry that the commercial article is stricken out ; it would have been very important to us to have got footing at least in the British West Indies, as a means of compelling France to pursue her true interest and ours, by opening her ports also to us.

We have just learned by a vessel from Cadiz, that the preliminary articles for a general peace were signed the 20th. The abstract of the treaty sent me by the Marquis de la Fayette does the highest honor to the moderation and wisdom of France. Never has she terminated a war with more glory, and in gaining nothing but that trophy of victory, Tobago, she has established a character, which confirms her friends, disarms her enemies, and obtains a reputation that is of more value than any territorial acquisitions she could make.

We have been in great distress with respect to our army. Pains were taken to inflame their minds, and make them uneasy at the idea of a peace, which left them without support. Inflammatory papers were dispersed in camp, calling them together to determine upon some mad action. The General interposed, postponed the meeting to a future day, on which he met them, and made them an address, that will do him more honor than his victories. After which they passed several resolves, becoming a patriot army. Congress are seriously engaged in endeavoring to do them justice. I am in great hopes that we shall shortly be brought back to such a situation as to be enabled to enjoy the blessings you have laid the foundation of.

I received from Mr. Franklin the papers relative to the Portuguese vessel, which I have caused to be laid before the Court of Appeals, where the cause is now depending. The cargo having been condemned, and the yacht acquitted at Boston, I doubt not but full justice will be done to the proprietors on the rehearing. You know so much of our constitution as to see that it is impossible to interfere further in these matters than by putting the evidence in a proper train to be examined. I have had the proceedings in the case of the brig Providentia transmitted to me from Boston, with a full state of the evidence, which I have examined. The cargo is condemned and the vessel acquitted, an allowance for freight having been made by the Court. The evidence does not admit a doubt of the justice of this decree. Should the Court of Denmark not be satisfied with this account, I will cause a copy of the proceedings to be transmitted



to you for their satisfaction. I hope this mark of attention to them will induce them to acknowledge the injustice they have done us in the detention of our prizes. This object should not be lost sight of.

I thank you for your present of M. d'Auberteuil's Essay, and shall dispose of the copies he has sent in the way you recommend. I could hardly have believed it possible that so many errors and falsehoods, that would shock the strongest faith on this side of the water, could be received as orthodox on the other.

I remit bills for the salaries of our Ministers. It is impossible that I can adjust their accounts here; you must settle with them, and they repay you out of the drafts I have made in their favor when they have been overpaid. Congress have, in pursuance of your sentiment in your letter of October, passed the enclosed resolution.\* So that on the quarter's salary due in April, there will be a deduction of all you gained by the course of exchange; and the payments will be reduced to par, at which rate they will always be paid in future. This deduction amounts on your salary to eight thousand three hundred and thirty-six livres, as will appear from the account that will be stated by Mr. Morris. I shall pay your bills into the hands of Mr. Robert Morris, whom you have constituted your agent. The bills for the other gentlemen, who may not be with you, are committed to your care. As the bills are drawn in their favor, they can only be paid on their endorsement.

Congress will, I believe, agree very reluctantly to let you quit their service. The subject, together with Mr. Adams's and Mr. Laurens's resignation, is under the consideration of a committee. If they report before this vessel sails you shall know their determination.

On the arrival of the Triumph from Cadiz, which brought orders for recalling the cruisers of his Britannic Majesty, Congress passed the enclosed resolution, which I transmitted with the intelligence we had received to Carleton and Digby. I sent my secretary with my letters, and expect him back this evening. I am anxious to know how the first messenger of peace has been received by them, as well

\* *March 7th, 1783.* "Resolved, That the salaries of the Ministers and other officers of the United States in Europe be estimated in future in dollars, at the rate of four shillings and sixpence sterling per dollar.

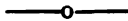
"That they be paid in bills of exchange upon France or Holland, at the rate of five livres five sous Turnois per dollar, without regard to the variations which may be occasioned by the course of exchange.

as to discover through him what steps they propose to take for the evacuation.

I ought to thank you for your journal before I conclude. The perusal of it afforded me great pleasure. I must pray you to continue it. I much wish to have every step which led to so interesting an event as the treaty which established our Independence. And though both Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams are minute in their journals, for which I am much obliged to them, yet new light may be thrown on the subject by you, who, having been longer acquainted with the Courts both of London and Versailles, have the means of more information relative to their principles and measures.

I have the honor to be, sir, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



FROM THE CITY OF HAMBURG TO CONGRESS.\*

Translation.

March 29th, 1783.

Right Noble, High, Mighty, Most Honorable Lords,

Since, by the preliminary articles of peace, concluded lately between the high belligerent Powers, the illustrious United States of North America have been acknowledged free, sovereign, and independent, and now since European Powers are courting in rivalry the friendship of your High Mightinesses,

We, impressed with the most lively sensations on the illustrious event, the wonder of this, and the most remote future ages, and desirous fully to testify the part which we take therein, do hereby offer our service and attachment to the cause.

And in the most sincere disposition of heart, we take the honor to wish, so as from Omnipotent Providence we do pray, that the most illustrious Republic of the United States of America may, during the remotest centuries, enjoy all imaginable advantages to be derived from that sovereignty which they gained by prudence and courage.

That, by the wisdom and active patriotism of your illustrious Congress, it may forever flourish and increase, and that the High and

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\* The original of this singular paper is not preserved, and the translation is here given as found in Dr. Franklin's public correspondence.

Mighty Regents of those free United States may, with ease and in abundance, enjoy all manner of temporal happiness; and at the same time we most obsequiously recommend our city to a perpetual friendly intelligence, and her trade and navigation in matters reciprocally advantageous to your favor and countenance.

In order to show that such mutual commerce with the merchant houses of this place may undoubtedly be of common benefit, your High Mightinesses will be pleased to give us leave to mark out some advantages of this trading city.

Here reigns a free unrestrained republican commerce, charged with but few duties.

Hamburg's situation upon the river Elbe is as if it were in the centre of the Baltic and the North Sea; and as canals are cut from the river through the city, goods may be brought in ships to the magazines in town, and from thence again to all parts of the world.

Hamburg carries on its trade with economy. It is the mart of goods of all countries, where they can be purchased not only of good quality, but sometimes cheaper than at first hand.

Here linen, woollen goods, calicoes, glass, copper, and other numerous produce of manufactured wares of the whole German Empire, are bought in by Portuguese, Spaniards, the English, Dutch, French, and other nations, and from hence further transported. In exchange whereof, considerable quantities of North American goods, much wanted in Germany, may be taken.

M. Penet, who in your country is honored with several offices, has sojourned here for some time, and with all who had the honor of his acquaintance, borne the character of an intelligent, skillful, and for reciprocally advantageous commerce a well disposed and zealous man, will certainly have the complaisance to give your High Mightinesses further explanation of the advantages of this trading place, which we have but briefly touched upon.

We now intercessionally and most obsequiously request your High Mightinesses to favor and countenance the trade of our merchants, and to suffer them to enjoy all such rights and liberties as you allow merchants of nations in amity; which in gratitude and with zeal we will in our place endeavor to retribute, not doubting that such mutual intercourse may be effected, since a good beginning thereof is already made on both sides, by the friendly reception of the vessels that have arrived in either country.

In further testimony of our most attentive obsequiousness and sincere attachment, we have deputed our citizen, John Abraham de Boor, who is charged with the concerns of a considerable merchant house, which, like several other merchant houses, of good report and solidity in this city, is desirous of entering with merchants of your country into reciprocal commerce. He is to have the honor to present to your High Mightinesses this our most obsequious missive; wherefore we most earnestly recommend him to your favorable reception. He has it from us in express charge, most respectfully to give your High Mightinesses, if required, such upright and accurate accounts of our situation and constitutions as may be depended upon, and at the same time in person to testify the assurance of the most perfect respect and attachment, with which attentively we remain, Right Noble, High, Mighty, and most honorable Lords, your most obsequious and devoted Burgomaster and Senate of the Imperial free City of Hamburg.

Given under our City seal, the 29th of March, 1783.



DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, March 31st, 1783.

My dear Friend,

I send you a paper entitled *Supplemental Treaty*, the substance of which I sent you some time ago, as I read it in part of a speech in the House of Commons. I have given a copy of it to Mr. L., as the grounds upon which my friend, the Duke of Portland, would have wished that any administration, in which he might have taken a part, should have treated with the American Ministers. All negociations for the formation of a Ministry in concert with the Duke of Portland are at an end.

The tenth article, which is supposed to be referred to the definitive treaty, is a renewal of the same proposition which I moved in Parliament some years ago, viz: on the 9th of April, 1778. I see nothing inconsistent with that proposition, either in the Declaration of Independence or in the treaty with France. Let it therefore remain, and emerge after the war, as a point untouched by the war. I assure you my consent should not be wanting to extend this principle between all the nations upon the earth. I know full well that those nations to which you and I are bound by birth and

consanguinity, would reap the earliest fruits from it. *Owing no man hate, and envying no man's happiness*, I should rejoice in the lot of my own country, and on her part say to America, *Nos duo turba sumus*. I send you, likewise, enclosed with this, some sentiments respecting the principles of some late negotiations, drawn up in the shape of Parliamentary motions by my brother, who joins with me in the sincerest good wishes to you for health and happiness, and for the peace of our respective countries, and of mankind.

Your ever affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.

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*Supplemental Treaty between Great Britain and the United States of North America.*

1. That the British troops be withdrawn from the United States with all convenient speed.

2. That all further prosecutions of loyalists in America be immediately abated, and that they be permitted to remain until twelve months after the definitive treaty with America in safety, and unmolested in their endeavors to obtain restitution of their estates.

3. That all ports shall be mutually opened for intercourse and commerce between Great Britain and the United States.

4. Agreed on the part of Great Britain, that all Prohibitory Acts shall be repealed, and that all obstructions to American ships, either entering inwards or clearing outwards, shall be removed, which may arise from any acts of Parliament heretofore regulating the commerce of the American States, under the description of British Colonies and Plantations, so as to accommodate every circumstance to the reception of their ships as the ships of independent States.

5. Agreed on the part of Great Britain, that all duties, rights, privileges, and all pecuniary considerations, shall remain, respecting the United States of America, upon the same footing as they now remain respecting the Province of Nova Scotia, or as if the said States had remained dependent upon Great Britain. All this subject to regulations and alterations by any future acts of the Parliament of Great Britain.

6. On the part of the American States it is agreed, that all laws prohibiting commerce with Great Britain shall be repealed.

7. Agreed on the part of the American States, that all ships and merchandize of the British dominions shall be admitted upon the

same terms as before the war. All this subject to future regulations or alterations by the Legislatures of the American States respectively.

8. That all prisoners on both sides be immediately released.

9. The spirit and principles of this treaty to be supported on either side by any necessary supplemental arrangements. No tacit compliance on the part of the American States in any subordinate points to be urged at any time hereafter in derogation of their independence.

*Separate Article to be referred to the Definitive Treaty.*

10. Neither shall the independence of the United States be construed any further than as independence, absolute and unlimited in matters of government, as well as commerce. Not into alienation, and therefore the subjects of his Britannic Majesty and the citizens of the United States shall mutually be considered as natural born subjects, and enjoy all rights and privileges as such in the respective dominions and territories, in the manner heretofore accustomed.

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*Paper mentioned in the close of Mr. Hartley's Letter.*

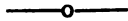
1. That it is the opinion of this House, that whenever Great Britain thought proper to acknowledge the independence of America, the mode of putting it into effect most honorably for this country would have been to have made the Declaration of Independence previous to the commencement of any treaty with any other Power.

2. That a deviation from that line of conduct has the effect of appearing to grant the independence of America solely to the demands of the House of Bourbon, and not, as was the real state of the case, from a change in the sentiments of this country as to the object and continuance of the American war.

3. That when this House, by its vote against the further prosecution of offensive war in America, had given up the point of contest, and adopted a conciliatory disposition, the pursuing those principles by an immediate and liberal negotiation upon the basis of independence, at the same time expressing a readiness to conclude a general peace with the allies of America upon honorable terms, would have been the most likely way to promote a mutual and beneficial intercourse between the two countries; to establish peace

upon a firm foundation; and would have prevented the House of Bourbon from having a right to claim any further obligations from America, as the assertors of their independence.

That the Minister who advised the late negotiations for peace has neglected to make use of those advantages which the determination of the House put him in possession of; that, by his delay in authorising persons properly to negotiate with the American Commissioners, he has shown a reluctance to acting upon the liberal principles of granting independence to America, as the determination of Great Britain upon mature consideration of the question; and has by such methods given advantage to the enemies of this country to promote and confirm that commerce and connexion between the United States of America and themselves, which during the contest have been turned from their natural channel with this country, and which this peace so concluded has not yet contributed to restore.



M. SALVA TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Algiers, April 1st, 1763.

Sir,

The imminent danger to which the vessels of your nation were exposed, which sailed in March last from Marseilles, and which owed their safety to the God of the seas alone, emboldens me to call your attention to this point.

Some secret enemies (whom I know) having given information to this Regency of their departure, nine armed ships immediately sailed to wait for them at Cape Palos. It is to be presumed that the Americans had passed the Straits.

Algiers has many ships, and the politics of certain European Powers do not restrain them from paying tribute to enjoy peace; they make use of these human harpies as a terror to the belligerent nations, whose commerce they chain to the car of Algerine piracy. We saw an example of this when his Imperial Majesty, to protect his flag, made use of the firman of the Sublime Porte. It was attacked, and five prizes were brought into this port in 1781, four of which with ballast were restored in February, 1782, at the claim of Capapigi Bashaw of the Porte, and of M. Timone, the Imperial

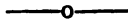
Agent, who was expelled, and whose correspondent I am, having been his Secretary on this occasion, and having revealed to his Highness Prince Kaunitz Rietberg, Minister at the Court of Vienna, horrors and crimes which would have remained unpunished but for my pen.

Humanity alone, sir, has engaged me to give you this advice. I request you will be pleased to keep it a secret ; your prudence will effect what may be necessary on this occasion.

I have the honor to offer you every information respecting this port, and flatter myself I shall succeed therein. I think to depart from this in May or June next for Marseilles, and to leave these Barbarian pirates.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

SALVA.



TO THE GRAND MASTER OF MALTA.

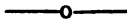
Passy, April 6th, 1783.

My Lord,

I have the honor to address to your Eminent Highness the medal which I have lately had struck. It is a homage of gratitude, my Lord, which is due to the interest you have taken in our cause, and we no less owe it to your virtues, and to your eminent Highness' wise administration of government.

Permit me, my Lord, to demand your protection for such of our citizens as circumstances may lead to your ports. I hope that your Eminent Highness will be pleased to grant it to them, and kindly receive the assurances of the profound respect with which I am, my lord, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO M. ROSENCRONE.

Passy, April 13th, 1783.

Sir,

Monsieur de Walterstorff has communicated to me a letter from your Excellency, which affords me great pleasure, as it expresses in clear and strong terms the good disposition of your Court\* to

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\*The Court of Denmark. See the letter referred to, page 417 of this volume.



form connexions of friendship and commerce with the United States of America. I am confident that the same good disposition will be found in the Congress; and having acquainted that respectable body with the purport of your letter, I expect a commission will soon be sent, appointing some person in Europe to enter into a treaty with his Majesty the King of Denmark for the purpose desired.

In the mean time, to prepare and forward the business as much as may be, I send, for your Excellency's consideration, such a sketch as you mention, formed on the basis of our treaty with Holland, on which I shall be glad to receive your Excellency's sentiments. And I hope that this transaction when completed, may be the means of producing and securing a long and happy friendship between our two nations.

To smooth the way for obtaining this desirable end, as well as to comply with my duty, it becomes necessary for me to mention to your Excellency the affair of our three prizes, which, having during the war entered Bergen as a neutral and friendly port, where they might repair the damages they had suffered, and procure provisions, were, by an order of your predecessor in the office you so honorably fill, violently seized and delivered to our enemies. I am inclined to think it was a hasty act, procured by the importunities and misrepresentations of the British Minister, and that your Government could not, on reflection, approve of it. But the injury was done, and I flatter myself your Excellency will think with me, that it ought to be repaired. The means and manner I beg leave to recommend to your consideration, and am, with great respect, sir &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, April 15th, 1783.

Sir,

You complain sometimes of not hearing from us. It is now near three months since any of us have heard from America. I think our last letters came with General de Rochambeau. There is now a project under consideration for establishing monthly packet boats between France and New York, which I hope will be carried into execution; our correspondence then may be more regular and frequent.

I send herewith another copy of the treaty concluded with Sweden. I hope, however, that you will have received the former, and that the ratification is forwarded. The King, as the Ambassador informs me, is now employed in examining the duties payable in his ports, with a view of lowering them in favor of America, and thereby encouraging and facilitating our mutual commerce.

M. de Walterstorff, Chamberlain of the King of Denmark, formerly Chief Justice of the Danish West India Islands, was last year at Paris, where I had some acquaintance with him, and he is now returned hither. The newspapers have mentioned him as intended to be sent Minister from his Court to Congress, but he tells me no such appointment has yet been made. He assures me, however, that the King has a strong desire to have a treaty of friendship and commerce with the United States, and he has communicated to me a letter, which he received from M. Rosencrone, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressing that disposition. I enclose a copy of the letter, and if Congress shall approve of entering into such a treaty with the King of Denmark, of which I told M. de Walterstorff I made no doubt, they will send to me, or whom else they shall think proper, the necessary instructions and powers for that purpose. In the mean time, to keep the business in train, I have sent to that Minister for his consideration a translation of the plan, *mutatis mutandis*, which I received from Congress for a treaty with Sweden, accompanied by a letter, of which likewise I enclose a copy. I think it would be well to make it one of the instructions to whoever is commissioned for the treaty, that he previously procure satisfaction for the prizes mentioned in my letter.

The definitive treaties have met with great delays, partly by the tardiness of the Dutch, but principally from the distractions in the Court of England, where for six or seven weeks there was properly no Ministry, nor any business effected. They have at last settled a Ministry, but of such a composition as does not promise to be lasting. The papers will inform you who they are. It is now said that Mr. Oswald, who signed the preliminaries, is not to return here, but that Mr. David Hartley comes in his stead to settle the definitive. A Congress is also talked of, and that some use is to be made therein of the mediation formerly proposed of the Imperial Courts. Mr. Hartley is an old friend of mine, and a strong lover of peace, so that

I hope we shall not have much difficult discussion with him ; but I could have been content to have finished with Mr. Oswald, whom we always found very reasonable.

Mr. Laurens, having left Bath, mended in his health, is daily expected at Paris, where Messieurs Jay and Adams still continue. Mr. Jefferson has not yet arrived, nor the *Romulus*, in which ship I am told he was to have taken his passage. I have been the more impatient of this delay, from the expectation given me of full letters by him. It is extraordinary, that we should be so long without any arrivals from America in any part of Europe. We have as yet heard nothing of the reception of the preliminary articles in America, though it is now nearly five months since they were signed. Barney, indeed, did not get away from hence before the middle of January, but copies went by other ships long before him ; he waited some time for the money he carried, and afterwards was detained by violent contrary winds. He had a passport from England, and I hope arrived safe ; though we have been in some pain for him, on account of a storm soon after he sailed.

The English merchants have shown great eagerness to reassume their commerce with America, but apprehending that our laws prohibiting that commerce, would not be repealed till England had set the example by repealing theirs, a number of vessels they had loaded with goods have been detained in port, while the Parliament have been debating on the repealing bill, which has been altered two or three times, and is not agreed upon yet. It was at first proposed to give us equal privileges in trade with their own subjects, repealing thereby with respect to us, so much of their navigation act as regards foreign nations. But that plan seems to be laid aside, and what will finally be done in the affair is uncertain. There is not a port in France, and few in Europe, from which I have not received several applications of persons desiring to be appointed consuls for America. They generally offer to execute the office for the honor of it, without salary. I suppose the Congress will wait to see what course commerce will take, and in what places it will fix itself, in order to find where consuls will be necessary, before any appointments are made, and perhaps it will then be thought best to send some of our own people. If they are not allowed to trade, there must be a great expense for salaries. If they may trade, and are

Americans, the fortunes they make will mostly settle in our own country at last. The agreement I was to make here respecting consuls, has not yet been concluded. The article of trading is important. I think it would be well to reconsider it.

I have caused to be struck here the medal, which I formerly mentioned to you, the design of which you seemed to approve. I enclose one of them in silver, for the President of Congress, and one in copper for yourself; the impression on copper is thought to appear best, and you will soon receive a number for the members. I have presented one to the King, and another to the Queen, both in gold, and one in silver to each of the Ministers, as a monumental acknowledgment, which may go down to future ages, of the obligations we are under to this nation. It is mighty well received, and gives general pleasure. If the Congress approve of it, as I hope they will, I may add something on the die (for those to be struck hereafter) to show that it was done by their order, which I could not venture to do till I had authority for it.

A multitude of people are continually applying to me personally, and by letters, for information respecting the means of transporting themselves, families, and fortunes to America. I give no encouragement to any of the King's subjects, as I think it would not be right in me to do it, without their sovereign's approbation; and, indeed, few offer from France but persons of irregular conduct and desperate circumstances, whom we had better be without; but I think there will be great emigrations from England, Ireland, and Germany. There is a great contest among the ports, which of them shall be of those to be declared *free* for the *American trade*. Many applications are made to me to interest myself in the behalf of all them, but having no instructions on that head, and thinking it a matter more properly belonging to the consul, I have done nothing in it.

I have continued to send you the English papers. You will often see falsehoods in them respecting what I say and do, &c. You know those papers too well to make any contradiction of such stuff necessary from me.

Mr. Barclay is often ill, and I am afraid the settlement of our accounts will be, in his hands, a long operation. I shall be impatient at being detained here on that score, after the arrival of my successor. Would it not be well to join Mr. Ridley with Mr.

Barclay for that service? He resides in Paris, and seems active in business. I know not indeed whether he would undertake it, but wish he may.

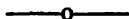
The finances here are embarrassed, and a new loan is proposed by way of lottery, in which it is said by some calculators, the King will pay at the rate of seven per cent. I mention this to furnish you with a fresh convincing proof against cavillers of the King's generosity toward us, in lending us six millions this year at five per cent., and of his concern for our credit, in saving by that sum the honor of Mr. Morris's bills, while those drawn by his own officers abroad have their payment suspended for a year after they become due. You have been told that France might help us more liberally if she would. This last transaction is a demonstration of the contrary.

Please to show these last paragraphs to Mr. Morris, to whom I cannot now write, the notice of this ship being short; but it is less necessary, as Mr. Grand writes him fully.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Mr. Laurens is just arrived.



CHARLES J. FOX TO B. FRANKLIN.

St. James's, April 19th, 1783.

Sir,

Although it is unnecessary for me to introduce to your acquaintance a gentleman so well known to you as Mr. Hartley, who will have the honor of delivering to you this letter, yet it may be proper for me to inform you, that he has the full and entire confidence of his Majesty's Ministers upon the subject of his mission.

Permit me, sir, to take this opportunity of assuring you how happy I should esteem myself if it were to prove my lot to be the instrument of completing a real and substantial reconciliation between two countries formed by nature to be in a state of friendship one with the other, and thereby to put the finishing hand to a building, in laying the first stone of which I may fairly boast that I had some share.

I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of regard and esteem, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

C. J. FOX.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

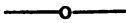
Passy, April 27th, 1783.

Sir,

The Count del Veome, an Italian nobleman of great distinction, does me the honor to be the bearer of this. I have not the satisfaction to be personally acquainted with this gentleman, but am much solicited by some of my particular friends, to whom his merits and character are known, to afford him this introduction to you. He is, I understand, a great traveller, and his view in going to America is merely to see the country and its great men. I pray you will show him every civility, and afford him that counsel which as a stranger he may stand in need of.

With great respect, I am, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, May 5th, 1783.

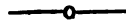
Sir,

I have received the two letters of yesterday and to-day, which you have done me the honor to write to me, and a copy of the three articles discussed between the Commissioners of the United States and Mr. Hartley. You are aware that I shall want a sufficient time to examine them, before submitting to you the observations which may relate to our reciprocal interests. Receive, in the mean time, my sincere thanks for this communication.

I hope to have the honor of seeing you to-morrow at Versailles. I trust you will be able to be present with the foreign Ministers. It is observed that the Commissioners from the United States rarely show themselves here, and inferences are drawn from it which I am sure their constituents would disavow if they had a knowledge of them.

I have the honor to be, &amp;c.,

DE VERGENNES.



TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, May 5th, 1783.

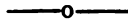
Sir,

It was my intention to pay my devoirs at Versailles to-morrow. I

thank your Excellency, nevertheless, for your kind admonition. I omitted two of the last three days from a mistaken apprehension, that being holidays there would be no court. Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay are both invalids; and since my last severe fit of the gout, my legs have continued so weak, that I am hardly able to keep pace with the Ministers, who walk fast, especially in going up and down stairs.

I beg you to be assured, that whatever deficiency there may be of strength, there is none of respect in, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, May 8th, 1783.

Dear Friend,

I send you enclosed the copies you desired of the papers I read to you yesterday.\* I should be happy if I could see, before I die, the proposed improvement of the law of nations established. The miseries of mankind would be diminished by it, and the happiness of millions secured and promoted. If the practice of privateering could be profitable to any civilized nation, it might be so to us Americans, since we are so situated on the globe, as that the rich commerce of Europe with the West Indies, consisting of manufactures, sugars, &c., is obliged to pass before our doors, which enables us to make short and cheap cruises, while our own commerce is in such bulky, low-priced articles as that ten of our ships taken by you are not equal in value to one of yours, and you must come far from home at a great expense to look for them. I hope, therefore, that this proposition, if made by us, will appear in its true light, as having humanity only for its motive. I do not wish to see a new Barbary rising in America, and our long extended coast occupied by piratical States. I fear lest our privateering success in the two last wars should already have given our people too strong a relish for that most mischievous kind of gaming, mixed blood; and if a stop is not now put to the practice, mankind may hereafter be more plagued with American corsairs than they have been and are with the Turkish.

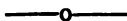
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\* See the Proposition about Privateering, p. 412 of this volume.

Try, my friend, what you can do in procuring for your nation the glory of being, though the greatest naval Power, the first who voluntarily relinquished the advantage that power seems to give them, of plundering others, and thereby impeding the mutual communications among men of the gifts of God, and rendering miserable multitudes of merchants and their families, artizans, and cultivators of the earth, the most peaceable and innocent part of the human species

With great esteem and affection, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, May 9th, 1783.

Dear Sir,

We have yet had no information from you subsequent to the signature of preliminary articles by France, Spain, and Great Britain; though we have seen a declaration for the cessation of hostilities signed by you, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Jay.

We grow every day more anxious for the definitive treaty, since we have as yet discovered no inclination in the enemy to evacuate their ports; and in sending off the slaves, they have directly infringed the provisional treaty, though we on our part have paid the strictest regard to it. This will be more fully explained by the enclosed copy of a letter from General Washington, containing a relation of what passed between him and General Carleton at a late interview. Let me again entreat, that no doubt may be left in the treaty relative to the time and manner of evacuating their ports here. Without more precision and accuracy in this than we find in the provisional articles we shall soon be involved in new disputes with Great Britain.

Our finances are still greatly embarrassed. You may in part see our distress, and the means Congress are using to relieve themselves, by the enclosed pamphlet, which I wish you and your colleagues to read, but not to publish.

The enclosed resolution imposes a new task upon you. I hope you will find no great difficulty in procuring the small augmentation to the loan which it requires. Be assured that it is extremely necessary to set us down in peace.

None of the States, though frequently called upon, have sent me



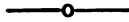
the estimates of their losses by the ravages of the British, except Connecticut and Rhode Island, and their accounts are extremely imperfect. Such as they are I enclose them. For my own part, I have no great expectation that any compensation for these losses will be procured; however, if possible, it should be attempted. Commissioners might be appointed to ascertain them here.

Great part of the prisoners are on their way to New York, and the whole will be sent in a few days. They will amount to about six thousand men.

Our ports begin to be crowded with vessels. There is reason to fear that a superabundance of foreign articles will, in the end, produce as much distress as the want of them has heretofore occasioned.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, May 31st, 1783.

Sir,

I informed you some time since, that I had written to the Court of Appeals on the subject of the Nossa Senhora da Soledado San Miguel e Almas, and laid before them the papers you sent me. The cause has since been determined in such a way as will, I hope, be satisfactory to her Portuguese Majesty. I enclose the copy of a letter from the first Judge of the Court of Appeals on that subject.

Nothing has yet been done as to the acceptance of your resignation, nor will, as I believe, anything be done very hastily. Many think your task will not be very burdensome now, and that you may enjoy in peace the fruit of your past labors.

As this will probably be the last letter which I shall have the pleasure of writing to you in my public character, I beg leave to remind you of the affairs of the Alliance and the Bon Homme Richard, which are still unsettled. I must also pray you not to lose sight of the vessels detained by his Danish Majesty. This will be a favorable opportunity to press for their restitution. I do not see how they can decently refuse to pay for them. Great Britain is bound in honor to make them whole again.

Preparations for the evacuation of New York still go on very

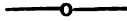
slowly, while the distress of our finances has compelled us to grant furloughs to the greater part of our army.

If it were possible to procure any addition to the last six millions, it would be extremely useful to us at present.

An entire new arrangement with respect to our foreign department is under consideration. What its fate will be, I know not.

I am, &c.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, June 12th, 1783.

Sir,

I wrote to you fully by a vessel from Nantes, which I hope will reach you before this. If not, this may inform you that the ratification of the treaty with Sweden is come, and ready to be exchanged when I shall receive that from Congress; that the treaty with Denmark is going on, and will probably be ready before the commission for signing it arrives from Congress. It is on the plan of that proposed by Congress for Sweden.

Portugal has likewise proposed to treat with us, and the Ambassador has earnestly urged me to give him a plan for the consideration of his Court, which I have accordingly done, and he has forwarded it. The Congress will send commissions and instructions for concluding these treaties to whom they may think proper; it is only upon the old authority, given by a resolution, to myself with Messrs. Deane and Lee, to treat with any European Powers, that I have ventured to begin these treaties in consequence of overtures from those Crowns.

The definitive treaty with England is not yet concluded, their Ministry being unsettled in their minds as to the terms of the commercial part; nor is any other definitive treaty yet completed here, nor even the preliminaries signed of one between England and Holland. It is now five months since we have had a line from you, the last being dated the 13th of January; of course we know nothing of the reception of the preliminary articles, or the opinion of Congress respecting them. We hoped to receive before this time such instructions as might have been thought proper to be sent to us for rendering more perfect the definitive treaty. We know nothing of

what has been approved or disapproved. We are totally in the dark, and therefore less pressing to conclude, being still (as we have long been) in daily expectation of hearing from you. By chance only, we learn that Barney is arrived, by whom went the despatches of the Commissioners, and a considerable sum of money. No acknowledgment of the receipt of that money is yet come to hand, either to me or M. Gerard. I make no doubt that both you and Mr. Morris have written, and I cannot imagine what has become of your letters.

With great esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I beg leave to recommend to your civilities the bearer of this, Dr. Bancroft, whom you will find a very intelligent, sensible man, well acquainted with the state of affairs here, and who has heretofore been employed in the service of Congress. I have long known him; and esteem him highly.

B. F.



THE AMBASSADOR FROM SWEDEN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, June 13th, 1783.

Sir,

I have just received his Majesty's ratification of the treaty of commerce concluded with the United States, which I will have the honor to send you as soon as it can be exchanged for the one from Congress.

Permit me, sir, on this occasion to repeat the request which the Ambassador has made you respecting Mr. Franklin, your grandson. He had the honor to tell you, that it would afford the King a pleasure to have a person residing with him in the capacity of the Minister of Congress, who bears your name in conjunction with such estimable qualifications as young Mr. Franklin possesses. He charged me before he departed, to repeat to you the same assurances, and you will allow me to add, on my part, my best wishes for the success of this matter.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

LE BARON DE STAEL.

FROM THE GRAND MASTER OF MALTA TO B. FRANKLIN.

## Translation.

Malta, June 21st, 1783.

Sir,

I received with the most lively sensibility the medal which your Excellency sent me, and the value I set upon this acquisition leaves my gratitude unbounded. This monument of American liberty has a distinguished place in my cabinet.

Whenever chance or commerce shall lead any of your fellow-citizens or their vessels into the ports of my island, I shall receive them with the greatest welcome. They shall experience from me every assistance they may claim, and I shall observe with infinite pleasure any growing connexion between that interesting nation and my subjects, especially if it will tend to convince your Excellency of the distinguished sentiments with which I am, sir, &c.,

The Grand Master,

ROHAN.



TO HENRY LAURENS.

Passy, July 6th, 1783.

Dear Sir,

We have been honored with several of your letters, and we have talked of writing to you, but it has been delayed. I will therefore write a few lines in my private capacity.

Our negociations go on slowly, every proposition being sent to England, and answers not returning very speedily.

Captain Barney arrived here last Wednesday, and brought despatches for us as late as the first of June. The preliminary articles are ratified. But General Carleton, in violation of those articles, has sent away a great number of negroes, alleging that freedom having been promised them by a proclamation, the honor of the nation was concerned, &c. Probably another reason may be, that if they had been restored to their masters, Britain could not have hoped any thing from such another proclamation hereafter.

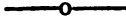
Mr. Hartley called yesterday to tell us that he had received a letter from Mr. Fox, assuring him that our suspicions of affected delays or change of system on their side were groundless; and that

they were sincerely desirous to finish as soon as possible. If this be so, and your health will permit the journey, I could wish your return as soon as possible. I want you here on many accounts, and should be glad of your assistance in considering and answering our public letters. There are matters in them of which I cannot conveniently give you an account at present.

Nothing could be more seasonable than success in the project you proposed, but we have now very little expectation.

Please to give my love to your valuable and amiable son and daughter, and believe me, with sincere esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



FROM M. ROSENCRONE, MINISTER OF DENMARK, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Copenhagen, July 8th, 1783.

Sir,

It was with the greatest alacrity that I laid before his Majesty the letter you did me the honor to write to me, as also the project of a treaty of amity and commerce that accompanied it. The King observed, with the greatest satisfaction, the assurances contained in that letter, of the good disposition of Congress to form connexions of amity and commerce with his kingdoms, such connexions being equally conformable to the interests of the two States, and to his Majesty's sincere desire to cement, by every possible means, that harmony, union, and confidence, which he wishes to establish forever between his Crown and the United States.

The enclosed *counter project* differs in nothing essential from the project sent by you, being drawn up entirely conformable to the same principles, which you will be certainly convinced of, sir, by the note explaining the reasons for adding some articles, and only giving a different turn to others, so that I flatter myself, that I shall soon hear that you are perfectly satisfied with them, having observed the most perfect reciprocity carefully established throughout.

As to the object mentioned in the letter with which you have honored me, you already know, sir, his Majesty's generous intentions towards the individuals in question, and his Majesty is the more induced to avail himself of the first opportunity to manifest these

intentions, as he thinks he may reasonably hope that Congress will also consider them as a distinguished proof of his friendship and esteem for that respectable body.

There remains nothing further for me to add, but that the King will adopt with great pleasure the most proper means to accelerate the conclusion of the treaty, which we have begun. For myself, it will be the most agreeable part of my office, sir, to assist in perfecting such happy connexions with a Minister of such universal reputation as yourself; and it is with sentiments of the most distinguished regard, that I have the honor to be, &c.,

ROSENCRONE.

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*Counter Project of a Treaty with Denmark.*

Translation.

Counter Project of a Treaty of Amity and Commerce between his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, and the United States of America.

His Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, and the United States of America, wishing to fix in an equitable and permanent manner the regulations necessary in the commerce which they are desirous to establish between their respective countries, conceive that they cannot accomplish this object better than by taking as the basis for their conventions the most perfect equality and reciprocity, leaving to each party the liberty of making such interior regulations, with respect to commerce and navigation, as shall appear suitable, and founding the advantages of commerce on reciprocal utility and the just laws of free competition. It is in consequence of these principles, and of mature deliberation, that the contracting parties have agreed upon the following articles :

ARTICLE I.

There shall be a firm, inviolable, and universal peace, and a true and sincere friendship, between his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, his heirs and successors, on the one part, and the United States of America on the other, and between the citizens

and subjects of the said Powers, and likewise between the countries, islands, cities, and places situated within their respective jurisdictions, and the people and inhabitants thereof, of whatever rank or condition they may be, without exception of persons or places.

ARTICLE II.

The subjects of his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, may frequent the countries and latitudes of the United States, reside and traffic there in all kinds of merchandise and effects, the importation or exportation whereof is not, or shall not be prohibited, and in all places where the navigation or commerce are not, or shall not be reserved solely for the citizens and inhabitants of the United States; and they shall not pay in the ports, harbors, roads, countries, islands, cities, and places of the United States, other or greater duties or imposts of any kind or denomination whatever, than such as the most favored nations pay or shall pay. They shall, moreover, enjoy all the rights, liberties, privileges, and exemptions, with respect to trade, navigation and commerce, which the most favored nations do or shall enjoy, and they shall also conform to the laws and ordinances which the said nations are or shall be bound to observe, whether in passing from one port to another of the dominions of the said State, or in returning from any part, or to any part of the world whatever.

ARTICLE III.

In like manner, the citizens and inhabitants of the United States of America may frequent the States of his Majesty, the King of Denmark and Norway, reside and traffic there in all kinds of merchandise and effects, the importation or exportation whereof is not, or shall not be prohibited, and in all places where the navigation and commerce are not, or shall not be reserved solely to his Danish Majesty's subjects, and they shall not pay in the ports, harbors, roads, countries, islands, cities, and places belonging to his said Majesty, other or greater duties and imposts of any kind or denomination whatever, than such as the most favored nations do or shall pay. They shall, moreover, enjoy all the rights, liberties, privileges, and exemptions, which the most favored nations do or shall enjoy, and they shall also conform to the laws and ordinances which the said nations are, or shall be bound to observe, whether in

passing from one port to another of his Danish Majesty's dominions, or in going to or returning from any part of the world whatever, and the United States of America, with their subjects and inhabitants, shall allow his Danish Majesty's subjects peaceably to enjoy their rights in the countries, islands, establishments, and seas, in the East and West Indies, without molestation or opposition.

## ARTICLE IV.

His Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, shall use every means in his power to protect and defend all the vessels and effects belonging to the citizens or inhabitants of the said United States of America, as shall be in his ports, harbors, or roads, or in the vicinity of his territories, countries, islands, cities, and places, as far as his jurisdiction extends, as to the sea, and shall use his efforts to recover and cause to be restored to the lawful proprietors, the vessels and effects which shall be taken from them within the extent of his said jurisdiction, and his ships of war, or any other convoys whatever, sailing under his authority, shall, on all occasions where there may be a common enemy, take under their protection all the vessels belonging to the citizens or inhabitants of the United States, or any of them which may be holding in the same course, or going the same route, and they shall defend the said ships as long as they shall hold the same course, or follow the same route, against every attack, force, or violence of the common enemy in the same manner as they are bound to defend and protect the vessels belonging to his said Majesty's subjects.

## ARTICLE V.

In like manner, the said United States and their ships of war, sailing under their authority, shall protect and defend, in conformity with the preceding article, all the vessels and effects belonging to the subjects of his Danish Majesty, and shall use all their efforts to recover and cause to be restored the said vessels and effects which shall have been taken within the extent of the jurisdiction of the said States, and each of them.

## ARTICLE VI.

It is agreed and determined that every merchant, captains of  
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merchant vessels, or others, his Danish Majesty's subjects, shall have entire liberty in all places within the dominions and jurisdiction of the United States of America, to manage themselves, their own affairs, and to employ whomsoever they please to manage them, and they shall not be obliged to make use of any interpreter or broker. nor to pay them any fee, unless they make use of them ; and with respect to the time and manner of loading or unloading their ships and whatever belongs to them, they shall always be considered and treated as the most favored nations, and shall pay no fee or salary which the said nations are not bound to pay in similar cases. The citizens, inhabitants, and subjects of the United States of America shall reciprocally have and enjoy the same privileges and liberties in all the places belonging to his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway.

## ARTICLE VII.

Whenever one of the contracting parties shall be at war with other Powers, the communication and free commerce of the subjects of the other party with the States of the said Powers, shall not on that account be interrupted. On the contrary, in this case, it is agreed and stipulated that every ship and vessel of the neutral party may freely navigate from port to port, and on the coasts of the States at enmity with the other party, and that the vessels and ships being free, shall likewise secure the liberty of merchandize ; so that every thing shall be judged free which shall be found on board the vessels belonging to the subjects of one of the contracting parties, although the loading, or part of it, should belong to the enemies of one of them ; it being, nevertheless, well understood that contraband goods shall be always excepted ; and it is also agreed, that this same liberty shall extend to the persons of such as shall be found on board of the free vessel, even though they should be enemies of one of the two contracting parties, and they shall not be taken from on board the said vessels, unless they are military characters, and actually in the service of the enemy.

## ARTICLE VIII.

The merchant vessels of one of the two contracting parties coming either from a port belonging to the enemy, or from their own, or a neutral port, and navigating towards a port of an enemy of the other, shall be bound every time they shall be required, to exhibit, as well

on the high seas as in port, their passports, or sea letters, and other public documents, which shall expressly prove that their loading is not of that kind which is prohibited as contraband; it being well understood, nevertheless, that in all cases where such merchant vessels shall be escorted by one or more vessels of war, the simple declaration of the officer commanding the convoy, that these vessels do not carry any contraband goods, shall be considered as fully sufficient, and they shall not require to examine the papers of the escorted vessel.

## ARTICLE IX.

It shall no sooner be found by the sea letters, passports, or other public documents, or by the verbal declaration of the commanding officer of the convoy, that the merchant vessels are not laden with contraband goods, than they shall be at liberty to continue their voyage without any hinderance; but if, on the contrary, the exhibition of the said passports or other documents, in case the vessels are not escorted, tends to discover that the said vessels carry merchandize reputed contraband, consigned to an enemy's port, it shall not, however, be permitted to break open the hatches of the said vessels, nor to open any chest, case, trunk, bale, package, or cask, which shall be found on board, or to displace or overturn the least part of the merchandize, whether the vessel belongs to his Danish Majesty's subjects, or to the citizens or inhabitants of the United States, until the cargo has been landed in presence of the officers of the Courts of Admiralty, and that the inventory has been made of it. And it shall not be permitted to sell, exchange, or alienate the merchandize reputed contraband, in any manner whatever, before trial has been held and legally finished, to declare them contraband, and that the Courts of Admiralty shall have pronounced them confiscated, without any prejudice, nevertheless, to the vessels or to the merchandize, which by virtue of the treaty shall be considered free. It shall not be permitted to retain these merchandizes under pretence that they have been intermixed with the contraband merchandize, and still less confiscate them as legal prizes. In case where a part only, and not the whole of the loading, shall consist of contraband merchandizes, and that the commander of the vessel consents to deliver them up to the privateer which shall have discovered them, then the captain, who shall have made the prize,

after having received the merchandize, must immediately release the vessel, and shall not in any wise prevent the continuation of his voyage; but in case the contraband merchandize cannot all be taken on board the captor, then the captain of the said vessel shall be at liberty, notwithstanding the offer to deliver the contraband goods, to conduct the master to the nearest port, in conformity to what is prescribed above.

## ARTICLE X.

In order to obviate entirely every disorder and violence, it is stipulated that whenever the merchant vessels and ships of the subjects and inhabitants of one of the two parties, navigating alone, shall be met by any vessel of war, privateer, or armed vessel of the other party, the said vessels of war, privateers, or armed vessels shall remain on their part constantly out of cannon-shot, and shall not send above two or three men in their boats on board the merchant vessels or ships, to examine the passports or other documents, which shall prove the property and cargoes of the said vessels or ships. Such of the vessels of war, privateers, or armed vessels of the one party, as shall molest or damage in any manner whatever the ships or vessels of the other, shall be obliged to answer for it in their persons and property, and consequently, to render satisfaction for all damage and interest over and above the reparation due for the insult shown the flag.

## ARTICLE XI.

It is agreed that every thing that is found laden by the respective subjects or inhabitants on board of vessels belonging to the enemies of the other party, or to their subjects, shall be confiscated without distinction of prohibited merchandize, in like manner as though it belonged to the enemy, excepting always such effects and merchandize as shall have been put on board of said vessels, before the declaration of war, or even after said declaration, if, at the time of lading, it was unknown, so that the merchandizes of the subjects of the two contracting parties, whether they are of the number termed contraband or otherwise, which, as has just been said, shall have been laden on board of a vessel belonging to the enemy before the war, or even after the declaration, when it was not known, shall in no wise be subject to confiscation, but shall be faithfully and *bona fide* returned without delay to their proprietors, who shall claim them,

it being well understood, nevertheless, that it shall not be permitted to carry into the enemy's ports merchandize of a contraband nature. And in order that every dissension may be avoided, it is agreed, that after the term of six months being elapsed from the declaration of war, the respective subjects, from whatever part of the world they may come, shall not allege the ignorance mentioned in the present article.

## ARTICLE XII.

All vessels and merchandize of whatever nature soever, whenever they shall have been recovered from the hands of pirates on the high seas, shall be brought into some port of one of the two States, and shall be delivered to the care of the officers of the said port, in order to be restored entire to their true proprietor, as soon as he shall have duly and sufficiently proved his property.

## ARTICLE XIII.

The ships of war belonging to the two parties, as also those of their subjects which are armed, shall conduct at full liberty where-soever they please, the prizes they shall have made from their enemies, without being obliged to pay any other duties than such as the most favored nations; the said vessels or the said prizes, on entering into the ports of his Danish Majesty, or other said United States, shall not be subject to be stopped or seized, nor shall the officers of the places have any power to take cognizance of the validity of the said prizes, which shall go out and be freely conducted in full liberty, to the places mentioned in the commissions, which the captains of the said vessels shall be obliged to produce.

## ARTICLE XIV.

In order to favor as much as possible the commerce on both sides, it is agreed, that if a war should happen between his Majesty, the King of Denmark and Norway, and the United States of America, (which God forbid,) nine months after the declaration of war shall be granted to the subjects on both sides to collect, sell, and transport freely merchandize and effects belonging to them, and to withdraw themselves; and if anything is taken from them, or if any injury is done to them during the above prescribed time, by one the two parties, full and entire satisfaction shall be given them in this respect.

## ARTICLE XV.

No subject of his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, shall take a commission or letter of marque (to arm any vessel or vessels, for the purpose of acting as a privateer against the said United States, or any of them, or against their subjects, people, or inhabitants, or against their property, or that of any among them) from any Prince whatever, with whom the said United States shall be at war. In like manner no citizen, subject, or inhabitant of the said United States, or of any of them, shall demand or accept of any commission or letter of marque (to arm any vessel or vessels, to cruise against the subjects of his said Majesty, or any of them, or their property) from any Prince or State whatever, with whom his Majesty shall be at war; and if any one of either nation should take such commissions or letter of marque, he shall be punished as a pirate.

## ARTICLE XVI.

In case the vessels of the subjects and inhabitants of one of the two contracting parties should approach the coasts of the other without, however, designing to enter into the port, or to discharge the cargo, or to break bulk after having entered, they shall be at liberty to depart, or to pursue their voyage without molestation, in the same manner as is practiced by the vessels belonging to the most favored nations.

## ARTICLE XVII.

The liberty of navigation and commerce mentioned in the 7th article of this treaty, shall extend to all kinds of merchandizes, excepting those which are designated by the name of contraband. Under this name of contraband, or prohibited merchandize, are only to be comprehended, arms, cannon, powder, matches, pikes, swords, lances, spears, halberts, mortars, petards, grenades, saltpetre, fusils, balls, bucklers, helmets, drums, coats of mail, and other arms of that kind fit to arm soldiers; swivels, shoulder belts, horses with their equipages, and all other instruments of war whatever, excepting always the quantity that may be necessary for the defence of the vessel and such as compose the crew. All other effects and merchandize not expressly designated above, of whatever kind or denomination they may be, and however fit they may be even for the

building, the repairing and equipment of vessels, or for the making of any machine or warlike instrument by land or by sea, shall not be considered as contraband, and they may consequently be transported and conducted in the freest manner by the subjects of the two contracting parties to places belonging to the enemy, excepting, nevertheless, such as shall be actually besieged, blocked up, or invested, and such shall only be considered so, where the vessels of the Power that attacks shall be so near, and posted in such a manner, as that there shall be evident danger to enter.

## ARTICLE XVIII.

The passports or sea letters, which shall prove the property of the neutral vessels, according to the tenor of the 8th article of the present treaty, shall be prepared and distributed according to the model which shall be agreed on. Every time that the vessel shall have returned to its own country, it shall be furnished with new passports of the like kind; at least, these passports must not be of an older date than two years after the time the vessel has returned last to its own country. Moreover, the vessels being loaded, must be provided with such certificates, or manifests, or other public documents as are commonly given vessels which depart from the ports from whence they have last sailed, containing a specification of the cargo, of the place from whence the vessel has departed, and that of her destination, in order that it may be known whether there are any contraband effects on board of the vessels, and whether they are destined to carry them to an enemy's country or not. If the names of the persons to whom the effects on board belong, are not expressed in the said documents, this omission shall not, however, give cause for confiscation, as the freedom of the vessel secures the freedom of the effects.

## ARTICLE XIX.

Should it happen that the ships or vessels of one of the two contracting parties, or of their subjects, should strike against the rocks, or strand, or be shipwrecked on the coast of the other, the respective subjects shall enjoy both for their persons and their ships and vessels, effects and merchandize, all the aid and assistance possible, as the inhabitants of the country, and shall only pay the same expenses and duties which the proper subjects of the State on

whose coasts they shall have stranded or have been shipwrecked, are subject to in similar cases.

## ARTICLE XX.

If the subjects or inhabitants of one of the two parties, compelled by storm, or by the pursuit of pirates, or of the enemy, or by any other accident, find themselves constrained to take refuge with their ships in the rivers, bays, ports, and roads belonging to the other, they shall be received and treated with every humanity and kindness, and they shall be permitted likewise to refresh and to furnish themselves at a just price with every kind of provisions, and every thing necessary for the maintenance and support of their persons, and for the reparation of their ships, provided they carry no commerce contrary to the laws and ordinances of the place or port into which they have entered.

## ARTICLE XXI.

It is agreed that the subjects of each of the contracting parties, and their ships, vessels, merchandize, and effects, shall not be subject to an embargo or detention in any of the countries, islands, towns, places, ports, or domains whatever of the other party, for any military expedition, public or private use in any manner whatever; and in cases of seizure, detentions, or arrests for debts contracted, or faults committed by any subject of one of the parties in the States of the other, the said seizures, detentions, or arrests shall be made only by order and authority of the justice, and according to the ordinary means; and with regard to debts and faults, process ought to be made by way of equity, and agreeably to the forms of the justice of the place.

## ARTICLE XXII.

The two contracting parties have mutually granted permission to have in their respective ports consuls, vice consuls, agents, and commissaries, which they shall appoint themselves, and whose functions shall be regulated by a particular convention whenever either of the parties wish to establish it.

## ARTICLE XXIII.

The subjects of his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway,

may in the country of the United States of America dispose of their effects by testament, donation, or otherwise; and their heirs, subjects of his said Majesty, shall succeed them, without any impediment, in all their effects, moveable and immoveable, either by testament or *ab intestat*; so that they may take possession of the inheritance, either by themselves, or by attorney, and dispose of it as they please, after having discharged the different duties established by the laws of the State where the said succession shall have been left; and in case that the heirs of the said dead subjects should be absent or minors, and that the deceased shall not have appointed guardians or executors, the property left shall then be inventoried by the notary public, or by the magistrate of the place, and disposed of in such manner that they may be kept and preserved for the legal proprietors; and, supposing that there should arise a dispute about such inheritance among several pretenders, then the judges of the places where the effects of the deceased shall be found, shall decide the process by a definitive sentence agreeably to the laws of the country. The contents of the present article shall be reciprocally observed, with respect to the subjects of the United States of America, in the States of his Danish Majesty.

## ARTICLE XXIV.

A perfect liberty of conscience shall be granted to the subjects and inhabitants of each party within the respective States, and they may, consequently, freely attend the worship of their religion without being disturbed or molested, provided that they submit, as to the public demonstration, to the ordinances and laws of the country.

## ARTICLE XXV.

His Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, and the United States of North America, have agreed that the present treaty shall be in full effect during the space of fifteen successive years, reckoning from the day of its ratification; and the two contracting parties reserve to themselves the power of renewing it at the expiration of that time.

## ARTICLE XXVI.

The present treaty shall be ratified on both sides, and the ratifications shall be exchanged within the space of eight months from the date of the signature.



*Explanation of the Counter Project of a Treaty of Amity and Commerce received from Denmark.*

Translation.

Although the simple comparison of the enclosed counter project, with the project proposed by Mr. Franklin, evidently proves the attention that has been shown on our part here to the negotiation set on foot, and which, in the main, has been agreed upon as to the principles which have been adopted for the basis of a treaty, as well as the most essential stipulations, we could not avoid, however, explaining more distinctly certain points of the counter project; and the eclairsissements that will be given of them will at the same time prove the amicable intentions with which it has been endeavored to facilitate the consequence of an affair too important to the welfare of the two nations, not to merit the attention and cares of the Powers which govern them.

The second and third articles will regulate the conduct of the reciprocal subjects in the respective States. Taking things as they now are, it is easily perceived that the stipulations of the said articles, although apparently reciprocal, give, however, superior advantages to the United States; for, according to the system of commerce, which subsists in Denmark and Norway, the most favored nations pay there no greater imposts or other duties than the proper subjects of the State, and the proper subjects of the State enjoy considerable dimunitions with respect to unprivileged nations, as well for their vessels as for their merchandize. It is evident, therefore, that the subjects of the United States of America being received among the most favored nations in Denmark and Norway, would not only gain by that means a competition with the said most favored, but also a preference over several other nations even in the neighborhood of Denmark, with whom no treaties of commerce have been concluded, and who, therefore, are still in the number of unprivileged, as to navigation and commerce, in the States of his Danish Majesty.

On the other hand, if the advantages which would result from these articles, as to the commerce of the subjects of Denmark in the territories of the United States, are considered, the said advantages would be confined to the simple competition with every other foreign nation; but, as there is no nation that we know of, which actually

pays in the territories of the United States other or greater duties than what the privileged or most favored nations are bound to pay, the Danish subjects would not find in the territories of the United States the same preference which the subjects of the United States would obtain in Denmark and Norway. The preceding considerations are not advanced for the purpose of taking any advantage, but they are pointed out only to show the impartiality and good will with which we desire to contribute to the mutual connexions of amity and commerce between the two nations, who will, it is to be hoped, more and more unite. As to the periods inserted in these articles, they do not essentially change the stipulations projected by the Minister of the United States; they only add therein some proper determination to prevent every misunderstanding on the subject of the reciprocal liberties and privileges, and to guaranty some rights, which the subjects of his Danish Majesty enjoy with respect to certain countries and colonies, as Iceland, Greenland, Finmarson, Faro, the establishment of Tranquibar, and, in certain respects, the Islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John; and if, at any time, it should please the United States to reserve for its own subjects similar rights, with respect to certain places, or certain kinds of merchandize, and to exclude therefrom every foreign nation, the same stipulations shall then suit their intentions. In like manner the same mark of reciprocity has been given to every change, excepting only the last clause of the third article, which has not been susceptible of the same turn, considering the local position of the United States, and which, undoubtedly for the same reason, has been inserted in the treaty of the United States with Holland, in the same manner as it is here in the counter project.

After having pointed out the privileges which the subjects of his Danish Majesty enjoy in the Islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John, it will not be useless to observe, that it is only the commerce and navigation between the said islands and Europe, which Denmark has appropriated to itself in any manner; but the commerce which is conducted between those islands and North America, although always subject to the same interior regulations on both sides, has been for a long while authorized by his Danish Majesty's commercial laws, and his said Majesty has, moreover, granted to the Islands of St. Thomas and St. John privileges, which

will give the commerce of these islands with America in particular, a freer course, and very different from that of the commerce of the colony. The advantages which the United States may derive from a more close commercial connexion with the said privileged islands, and whose ports, distinguished by the security they insure to vessels, appear to invite the commercial subjects of America, are too evident to need any circumstantial detail. There shall only be added, therefore, to what has been said, this single observation, that his Danish Majesty, having it very much at heart to open every possible road to industry and commerce, finds himself much disposed to favor the connexion in question, and that, if for this purpose the United States, after the conclusion of the present treaty, which shall fix the general commercial points between the contracting parties, should desire a particular convention to agree upon the reciprocal and local advantages proper to accomplish this object, his said Majesty would willingly come into it, provided that the United States were equally disposed on their part to facilitate the affair.

The fourth and fifth articles have only been modified in order to remove the doubts which might arise with respect to the defence and protection due to the vessels belonging to the respective subjects. It is only in cases of attack from the common enemy, against whom it was conceived possible to confine each other by these articles; for in case that one of the parties was at war and the other at peace, the vessels belonging to the neutral party could not protect the vessels belonging to the belligerent party, without taking a part and quitting its neutrality.

The privileges of the most favored nations undoubtedly guaranty to the respective subjects the favors mentioned in the sixth, eleventh, fourteenth, and seventeenth articles of the project. For this reason it has appeared, that it would be better to reduce the points detailed in these articles to the number of general liberties of the most favored nations, and this is what has been done in the sixth, thirteenth, sixteenth, and twenty-first articles of the counter project, contenting ourselves here with the assurance, that the subjects of his Danish Majesty in the cases mentioned here, as well as in any other, shall be regarded and treated in the territories within the dominions of the United States as the most favored nations, and in expectation that the United States will not demand any thing more in these respects.

The seventh, eighth, and ninth articles of the counter project only contain the spirit and ideas of the fifteenth, seventh, and eighth articles of the project, to which has been added some further stipulations, conformable to the principles which have been established and acknowledged with respect to the commerce of neutral nations in time of war.

The term of two months which has been proposed in the ninth article, and that of six months named in the twelfth article of the project, did not appear to correspond with the extent of commerce which is carried on, particularly with the East Indies, nor with difficulties which the merchants or inhabitants sometimes find in arranging their affairs to change their abode. It is for this reason that instead of two and six months, the terms six and nine months have been substituted, it being nevertheless well understood, that from the friendship and good understanding which is about being strengthened between the two nations, the subjects of neither party will ever have cause to take refuge on account of a rupture.

Although no fault has been found as to the merchandize, which the project has called contraband, or not contraband in time of war, there is however reason to think that it would still be better for the conveniency of the contracting parties, only to name in express terms the contraband, without detailing the free merchandize, with respect to which no better explanation could be given, as it appears, than by agreeing that every thing that is not called contraband shall be comprehended in the number of free merchandize; consequently, on this principle the seventeenth article of the counter project has been arranged, and at the end of the article has been added the definition of a port that is blocked up.

The new articles that have been proposed on this side principally turn on reciprocal points and favors, which justice and equity demand, and which humanity and the rights of nations ordinarily grant, even without stipulation by express conventions; but it is usage that has introduced them into treaties, and it is conceived that it is no less necessary to conform thereto.

As to the passports mentioned in the eighteenth article of the counter project, there is nothing easier than to agree about them after the conclusion of the treaty, or at the time when it is concluded and the models that shall be agreed on can then be officially exchanged and published in case of necessity.

GIACOMO F. CROCCO TO B. FRANKLIN.

Cadiz, July 15th, 1783.

Sir,

His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Morocco, did me the honor to appoint me to be the bearer of his answer to the United Provinces of North America, with which he is willing to sign a treaty of peace and commerce, and in consequence has already given orders to his captains of men of war not to molest on the open seas the American vessels, which agreeable news I have already given to Mr. Richard Harrison. According to my instructions, I am to accompany to the Court of Morocco the Ambassador that will be appointed to conclude the treaty of peace. I presume that your Excellency is already acquainted that the travelling expenses and other charges of ambassadors or envoys sent to Europe by the Emperor of Morocco are to be paid by the Court or Republic which demands his friendship. In a few days I intend to set out for Madrid, where I will remain till I receive your Excellency's answer to this letter, directed to William Carmichael, the United States Chargé d'Affaires at the Court of Spain, who, I make no doubt, will receive orders to supply me with the money I may want on the occasion.

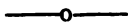
As soon as I arrive at Paris I shall have the satisfaction to entertain at large your Excellency on the present negociation, not doubting it will soon be concluded to the advantage of both Courts.

In the mean time I remain, most truly, sir, &c.,

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P. S. I was obliged to call on a friend to write you this letter in English, otherwise I could only do it in the Italian language.

G. F. C.



TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, July 22d, 1783.

Sir,

You have complained, sometimes with reason, of not hearing from your foreign Ministers; we have had cause to make the same complaint, six full months having intervened between the latest date of your preceding letters and the receipt of those by Captain Barney.

During all this time we were ignorant of the reception of the provisional treaty, and the sentiments of Congress upon it, which, if we had received sooner, might have forwarded the proceedings on the definitive treaty, and perhaps brought them to a conclusion, at a time more favorable than the present. But these occasional interruptions of correspondence are the inevitable consequences of a state of war, and of such remote situations. Barney had a short passage, and arrived some days before Colonel Ogden, who also brought despatches from you, all of which are come safe to hand. We, the Commissioners, have in our joint capacity written a letter to you, which you will receive with this.

I shall now answer yours of March 26th, May the 9th, and May the 31st.

It gave me great pleasure to learn by the first, that the news of peace diffused general satisfaction. I will not now take it upon me to justify the apparent reserve respecting this Court at the signature, which you disapprove. We have touched upon it in our general letter. I do not see, however, that they have much reason to complain of that transaction. Nothing was stipulated to their prejudice, and none of the stipulations were to have force but by a subsequent act of their own. I suppose, indeed, that they have not complained of it, or you would have sent us a copy of the complaint, that we might have answered it. I long since satisfied Count de Vergennes about it here. We did what appeared to all of us best at the time, and if we have done wrong, the Congress will do right after hearing us, to censure us. Their nomination of five persons to the service seems to mark that they had some dependence on our joint judgment, since one alone could have made a treaty by direction of the French Ministry as well as twenty.

I will only add, with respect to myself, neither the letter from M. Marbois, handed us through the British negociators, (a suspicious channel,) nor the conversations respecting the fishery, the boundaries, royalists, &c., recommending moderation in our demands, are of weight sufficient in my mind to fix an opinion that this Court wished to restrain us in obtaining any degree of advantage we could prevail on our enemies to accord, since those discourses are fairly resolvable by supposing a very natural apprehension, that we, relying too much on the ability of France to continue the war in our favor, and supply us constantly with money, might insist on more advantages than the

English would be willing to grant, and thereby lose the opportunity of making peace, so necessary to all our friends.

I ought not, however, to conceal from you, that one of my colleagues is of a very different opinion from me in these matters. He thinks the French Minister one of the greatest enemies of our country; that he would have straitened our boundaries to prevent the growth of our people; contracted our fishery, to obstruct the increase of our seamen; and retained the royalists among us, to keep us divided; that he privately opposes all our negociations with foreign Courts, and afforded us, during the war, the assistance we received only to keep it alive, that we might be so much the more weakened by it; that to think of gratitude to France is the greatest of follies, and that to be influenced by it would ruin us. He makes no secret of his having these opinions, expresses them publicly, sometimes in presence of the English Ministers, and speaks of hundreds of instances which he could produce in proof of them. None, however, have yet appeared to me, unless the conversations and letter above mentioned are reckoned such.

If I were not convinced of the real inability of this Court to furnish the further supplies we asked, I should suspect these discourses of a person in his station might have influenced the refusal; but I think they have gone no further than to occasion a suspicion that we have a considerable party of antigallicans in America, who are not tories, and consequently, to produce some doubts of the continuance of our friendship. As such doubts may hereafter have a bad effect, I think we cannot take too much care to remove them; and it is, therefore, I write this to put you on your guard, (believing it my duty, though I know that I hazard by it a mortal enmity,) and to caution you respecting the insinuations of this gentleman against this Court, and the instances he supposes of their ill will to us, which I take to be as imaginary as I know his fancies to be, that Count de Vergennes and myself are continually plotting against him, and employing the newswriters of Europe to depreciate his character, &c. But, as Shakspeare says, "Trifles light as air," &c., I am persuaded, however, that he means well for his country, is always an honest man, often a wise one, but sometimes, and in some things, absolutely out of his senses.

When the commercial article mentioned in yours of the 26th was struck out of our proposed preliminaries by the British Ministry, the

reason given was, that sundry acts of Parliament still in force were against it, and must be first repealed, which I believe was really their intention, and sundry bills were accordingly brought in for that purpose; but new Ministers with different principles succeeding, a commercial proclamation totally different from those bills has lately appeared. I send enclosed a copy of it. We shall try what can be done in the definitive treaty; towards setting aside that proclamation; but if it should be persisted in, it will then be a matter worthy the attentive discussion of Congress, whether it will be most prudent to retort with a similar regulation in order to force its repeal, which may possibly tend to bring on another quarrel, or to let it pass without notice, and leave it to its own inconvenience, or rather impracticability in the execution, and to the complaints of the West India planters, who must all pay much dearer for our produce under those restrictions.

I am not enough master of the course of our commerce to give an opinion on this particular question, and it does not behoove me to do it; yet I have seen so much embarrassment and so little advantage in all the restraining and compulsive systems, that I feel myself strongly inclined to believe that a State which leaves all her ports open to all the world upon equal terms, will, by that means, have foreign commodities cheaper, sell its own productions dearer, and be on the whole the most prosperous. I have heard some merchants say that there is ten per cent. difference between *Will you buy?* and *Will you sell?* When foreigners bring us their goods, they want to part with them speedily, that they may purchase their cargoes and despatch their ships, which are at constant charges in our ports: we have then the advantage of their *Will you buy?* And when they demand our produce we have the advantage of their *Will you sell?* And the concurring demand of a number also contribute to raise our prices. Thus both those questions are in our favor at home, against us abroad.

The employing, however, of our own ships and raising a breed of seamen among us, though it should not be a matter of so much private profit as some imagine, is nevertheless of political importance, and must have weight in considering this subject.

The judgment you make of the conduct of France in the peace, and the greater glory acquired by her moderation than even by her arms appears to me perfectly just. The character of this Court and



*Explanation of the Counter Project of a Treaty of Amity and Commerce received from Denmark.*

Translation.

Although the simple comparison of the enclosed counter project, with the project proposed by Mr. Franklin, evidently proves the attention that has been shown on our part here to the negotiation set on foot, and which, in the main, has been agreed upon as to the principles which have been adopted for the basis of a treaty, as well as the most essential stipulations, we could not avoid, however, explaining more distinctly certain points of the counter project; and the eclairecissements that will be given of them will at the same time prove the amicable intentions with which it has been endeavored to facilitate the consequence of an affair too important to the welfare of the two nations, not to merit the attention and cares of the Powers which govern them.

The second and third articles will regulate the conduct of the reciprocal subjects in the respective States. Taking things as they now are, it is easily perceived that the stipulations of the said articles, although apparently reciprocal, give, however, superior advantages to the United States; for, according to the system of commerce, which subsists in Denmark and Norway, the most favored nations pay there no greater imposts or other duties than the proper subjects of the State, and the proper subjects of the State enjoy considerable diminutions with respect to unprivileged nations, as well for their vessels as for their merchandize. It is evident, therefore, that the subjects of the United States of America being received among the most favored nations in Denmark and Norway, would not only gain by that means a competition with the said most favored, but also a preference over several other nations even in the neighborhood of Denmark, with whom no treaties of commerce have been concluded, and who, therefore, are still in the number of unprivileged, as to navigation and commerce, in the States of his Danish Majesty.

On the other hand, if the advantages which would result from these articles, as to the commerce of the subjects of Denmark in the territories of the United States, are considered, the said advantages would be confined to the simple competition with every other foreign nation; but, as there is no nation that we know of, which actually

pays in the territories of the United States other or greater duties than what the privileged or most favored nations are bound to pay, the Danish subjects would not find in the territories of the United States the same preference which the subjects of the United States would obtain in Denmark and Norway. The preceding considerations are not advanced for the purpose of taking any advantage, but they are pointed out only to show the impartiality and good will with which we desire to contribute to the mutual connexions of amity and commerce between the two nations, who will, it is to be hoped, more and more unite. As to the periods inserted in these articles, they do not essentially change the stipulations projected by the Minister of the United States; they only add therein some proper determination to prevent every misunderstanding on the subject of the reciprocal liberties and privileges, and to guaranty some rights, which the subjects of his Danish Majesty enjoy with respect to certain countries and colonies, as Iceland, Greenland, Finnmarson, Faro, the establishment of Tranquibar, and, in certain respects, the Islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John; and if, at any time, it should please the United States to reserve for its own subjects similar rights, with respect to certain places, or certain kinds of merchandize, and to exclude therefrom every foreign nation, the same stipulations shall then suit their intentions. In like manner the same mark of reciprocity has been given to every change, excepting only the last clause of the third article, which has not been susceptible of the same turn, considering the local position of the United States, and which, undoubtedly for the same reason, has been inserted in the treaty of the United States with Holland, in the same manner as it is here in the counter project.

After having pointed out the privileges which the subjects of his Danish Majesty enjoy in the Islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John, it will not be useless to observe, that it is only the commerce and navigation between the said islands and Europe, which Denmark has appropriated to itself in any manner; but the commerce which is conducted between those islands and North America, although always subject to the same interior regulations on both sides, has been for a long while authorized by his Danish Majesty's commercial laws, and his said Majesty has, moreover, granted to the Islands of St. Thomas and St. John privileges, which

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The privileges of the most favored nations undoubtedly guaranty to the respective subjects the favors mentioned in the sixth, eleventh, fourteenth, and seventeenth articles of the project. For this reason it has appeared, that it would be better to reduce the points detailed in these articles to the number of general liberties of the most favored nations, and this is what has been done in the sixth, thirteenth, sixteenth, and twenty-first articles of the counter project, contenting ourselves here with the assurance, that the subjects of his Danish Majesty in the cases mentioned here, as well as in any other, shall be regarded and treated in the territories within the dominions of the United States as the most favored nations, and in expectation that the United States will not demand any thing more in these respects.

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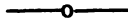
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The judgment you make of the conduct of France in the peace, and the greater glory acquired by her moderation than even by her arms appears to me perfectly just. The character of this Court and



nation seems, of late years, to be considerably changed. The ideas of aggrandizement by conquest are out of fashion, and those of commerce are more enlightened and more generous than heretofore. We shall soon, I believe, feel something of this in our being admitted to a greater freedom of trade with their islands. The wise here think France great enough; and its ambition at present seems to be only that of justice and magnanimity towards other nations, fidelity and utility to its allies.

The Ambassador of Portugal was much pleased with the proceedings relating to their vessel, which you sent me, and assures me they will have a good effect at his Court. He appears extremely desirous of a treaty with our States; I have accordingly proposed to him the plan of one (nearly the same with that sent me for Sweden) and after my agreeing to some alterations, he has sent it to his Court for approbation. He told me at Versailles, last Tuesday, that he expected its return to him on Saturday next, and anxiously desired that I would not despatch our packet without it, that Congress might consider it, and if approved, send a commission to me or some other Minister to sign it.

I venture to go thus far in treating, on the authority only of a kind of a general power, given formerly by a resolution of Congress to Messrs. Franklin, Deane, and Lee; but a special commission seems more proper to complete a treaty, and more agreeable to the usual forms of such business.

I am in just the same situation with Denmark; that Court by its Minister here has desired a treaty with us. I have proposed a plan formed on that sent me for Sweden; it has been under consideration some time at Copenhagen, and is expected here this week, so that I may possibly send that also by this conveyance. You will have seen by my letter to the Danish Prime Minister, that I did not forget the affair of the prizes. What I then wrote, produced a verbal offer made me here, of £10,000 sterling, proposed to be given by his Majesty to the captors, if I would accept it as a full discharge of our demand. I could not do this, I said, because it was not more than a fifth part of the estimated value. In answer, I was told that the estimation was probably extravagant, that it would be difficult to come at the knowledge of their true value, and that whatever they might be worth in themselves, they should not be estimated as of such value to us when at Bergen, since the English probably

watched them, and might have retaken them in their way to America ; at least, they were at the common risk of the seas and enemies, and the insurance was a considerable drawback ; that this sum might be considered as so much saved for us by the King's interference ; for that if the English claimants had been suffered to carry the cause into the common courts, they must have recovered the prizes by the laws of Denmark ; it was added, that the King's honor was concerned, that he sincerely desired our friendship, but he would avoid, by giving this sum in the form of a present to the captors, the appearance of its being exacted from him as the reparation of an injury when it was really intended rather as a proof of his strong disposition to cultivate a good understanding with us.

I replied, that the value might possibly be exaggerated ; but that we did not desire more than should be found just on inquiry, and that it was not difficult to learn from London what sums were insured upon the ships and cargoes, which would be some guide ; and that a reasonable abatement might be made for the risk ; but that the Congress could not, in justice to their mariners, deprive them of any part that was truly due to those brave men, whatever abatement they might think fit to make (as a mark of their regard for the King's friendship) of the part belonging to the public ; that I had, however, no instructions or authority to make any abatement of any kind, and could, therefore, only acquaint Congress with the offer, and the reasons that accompanied it, which I promised to state fully and candidly (as I have now done) and attend their orders, desiring only that it might be observed, we had presented our complaint with decency, that we had charged no fault on the Danish Government, but what might arise from inattention or precipitancy, and that we had intimated no resentment, but had waited with patience and respect the King's determination, confiding that he would follow the equitable disposition of his own breast, by doing us justice as soon as he could do it with conveniency ; that the best and wisest Princes sometimes erred ; that it belonged to the condition of man, and was, therefore, inevitable ; and the true honor in such cases consisted not in disowning or hiding the error, but in making ample reparation ; that, though I could not accept what was offered on the terms proposed, our treaty might go on, and its articles be prepared and considered, and, in the mean time, I hoped his Danish Majesty would

reconsider the offer, and make it more adequate to the loss we had sustained. Thus that matter rests; but I hourly expect to hear further, and perhaps may have more to say on it before the ship's departure.

I shall be glad to have the proceedings you mention respecting the brig *Providentia*. I hope the equity and justice of our Admiralty Courts, respecting the property of strangers, will always maintain their reputation, and I wish particularly to cultivate the disposition of friendship towards us, apparent in the late proceedings of Denmark, as the Danish Islands may be of use to our West India commerce, while the English impolitic restraints continue.

The Elector of Saxony, as I understand from his Minister here, has thoughts of sending one to Congress, and proposing a treaty of commerce and amity with us. Prussia has likewise an inclination to share in a trade with America, and the Minister of that Court, though he has not directly proposed a treaty, has given me a packet of lists of the several sorts of merchandize they can furnish us with, which he requests me to send to America for the information of our merchants.

I have received no answer yet from Congress to my request of being dismissed from their service. They should, methinks, reflect, that if they continue me here, the faults I may henceforth commit, through infirmities of age, will be rather theirs than mine. I am glad my journal afforded you any pleasure. I will, as you desire, endeavor to continue it. I thank you for the pamphlet; it contains a great deal of information respecting our finances. We shall, as you advise, avoid publishing it. But I see they are publishing it in the English papers. I was glad I had a copy authenticated by the signature of Secretary Thomson, by which I could assure Count de Vergennes that the money contract I had made with him was ratified by Congress, he having just before expressed some uneasiness to me at its being so long neglected. I find it was ratified soon after it was received, but the ratification, except in that pamphlet, has not yet come to hand. I have done my best to procure the further loan directed by the resolution of Congress. It was not possible. I have written on that matter to Mr. Morris. I wish the rest of the estimates of losses and mischiefs were come to hand; they would still be of use.

Mr. Barclay has in his hands the affair of the Alliance and Bon

Homme Richard. I will afford him all the assistance in my power, but it is a very perplexed business. That expedition, though for particular reasons under American commissions and colors, was carried on at the King's expense, and under his orders. M. de Chaumont was the agent appointed by the Minister of Marine to make the outfit. He was also chosen by all the captains of the squadron, as appears by an instrument under their hands, to be their agent, receive, sell, and divide prizes, &c. The Crown bought two of them at public sale, and the money I understand is lodged in the hands of a responsible person at L'Orient. M. de Chaumont says he has given in his accounts to the Marine, and that he has no more to do with the affair, except to receive a balance due to him. That account, however, is I believe unsettled, and the absence of some of the captains is said to make another difficulty, which retards the completion of the business. I never paid or received any thing relating to that expedition, nor had any other concern in it than barely ordering the Alliance to join the squadron at M. de Sartine's request. I know not whether the other captains will not claim a share in what we may obtain from Denmark, though the prizes were made by the Alliance, when separate from the squadron. If so, that is another difficulty in the way of making abatement in our demand without their consent.

I am sorry to find that you have thoughts of quitting the service. I do not think your place can be easily well supplied. You mention that an entire new arrangement, with respect to foreign affairs, is under consideration. I wish to know whether any notice is likely to be taken in it of my grandson. He has now gone through an apprenticeship of near seven years in the ministerial business, and is very capable of serving the States in that line, as possessing all the requisites of knowledge, zeal, activity, language, and address. He is well liked here, and Count de Vergennes has expressed to me in warm terms his very good opinion of him. The late Swedish Ambassador, Count de Creutz, who has gone home to be Prime Minister, desired I would endeavor to procure his being sent to Sweden, with a public character, assuring me that he should be glad to receive him there as our Minister, and that he knew it would be pleasing to the King.\* The present Swedish Ambassador has also

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\* See the Swedish Ambassador's letter, p. 444.

proposed the same thing to me, as you will see by a letter of his which I enclose.\* One of the Danish Ministers, M. Walterstorff, who will probably be sent in a public character to Congress, has also expressed his wish that my grandson may be sent to Denmark. But it is not my custom to solicit employments for myself, or any of my family, and I shall not do it in this case. I only hope, that if he is not to be employed in your new arrangement, I may be informed of it as soon as possible, that while I have strength left for it, I may accompany him in a tour to Italy, returning through Germany, which I think he may make to more advantage with me than alone, and which I have long promised to afford him as a reward for his faithful service, and his tender, filial attachment to me.

*July 25th.* While I was writing the above, M. Walterstorff came in, and delivered me a packet from M. Rosencrone, the Danish Prime Minister, containing the project of the treaty, with some proposed alterations, and a paper of reasons in support of them.† Fearing that we should not have time to copy them, I send herewith the originals, relying on his promise to furnish me with copies in a few days. He seemed to think that the interests of the merchants is concerned in the immediate conclusion of the treaty, that they may form their plans of commerce, and wished to know whether I did not think my general power, above mentioned, sufficient for that purpose. I told him I thought a particular commission more agreeable to the forms, but if his Danish Majesty would be content for the present with the general authority, formerly given to me, I believed I might venture to act upon it, reserving by a separate article to Congress the power of shortening the term in case any part of the treaty should not be to their mind, unless the alteration of such part should hereafter be agreed on.

The Prince de Deuxponts was lately at Paris, and applied to me for information respecting a commerce which is desired between the Electorate of Bavaria and America. I have it also from a good hand at the Court of Vienna, that the Emperor is desirous of establishing a commerce with us from Trieste, as well as Flanders, and would make a treaty with us if proposed to him. Since our trade is laid

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\* See p. 444.

† See M. de Rosencrone's letter, and the other papers here mentioned, p. 446. *et seq.*

open, and no longer a monopoly to England, all Europe seems desirous of sharing in it, and for that purpose to cultivate our friendship. That it may be better known everywhere what sort of people and what kind of government they will have to treat with, I prevailed with our friend, the Duc de la Rochefoucault, to translate our book of Constitutions into French, and I presented copies to all the Foreign Ministers. I send you one herewith. They are much admired by the politicians here, and it is thought will induce considerable emigrations of substantial people from different parts of Europe to America. It is particularly a matter of wonder, that in the midst of a cruel war, raging in the bowels of our country, our sages should have the firmness of mind to sit down calmly and form such complete plans of government. They add considerably to the reputation of the United States.

I have mentioned above the port of Trieste, with which we may possibly have a commerce, and I am told that many useful productions and manufactures of Hungary may be had extremely cheap there. But it becomes necessary first to consider how our Mediterranean trade is to be protected from the corsairs of Barbary. You will see by the enclosed copy of a letter\* I received from Algiers, the danger two of our ships escaped last winter. I think it not improbable that those rovers may be privately encouraged by the English to fall upon us, and to prevent our interference in the carrying trade; for I have in London heard it is a maxim among the merchants, that if *there were no Algiers, it would be worth England's while to build one*. I wonder, however, that the rest of Europe do not combine to destroy those nests, and secure commerce from their future piracies.

I made the Grand Master of Malta a present of one of our medals in silver, writing to him a letter, of which I enclose a copy;† and I believe our people will be kindly received in his ports; but that is not sufficient; and perhaps, now we have peace, it will be proper to send Ministers with suitable presents, to establish a friendship with the Emperor of Morocco, and the other Barbary States, if possible. Mr. Jay will inform you of some steps that have been taken by a person at Alicant, without authority, towards a treaty with that Emperor. I send you herewith a few more of the above mentioned

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\* See p. 433. † See above, p. 432.

medals, which have given great satisfaction to this Court and nation. I should be glad to know how they are liked with you.

Our people, who were prisoners in England, are now all discharged. During the whole war, those who were in Forton prison, near Portsmouth, were much befriended by the constant charitable care of Mr. Wren, a Presbyterian minister there, who spared no pains to assist them in their sickness and distress, by procuring and distributing among them the contributions of good Christians, and prudently dispensing the allowance I made them, which gave him a great deal of trouble, but he went through it cheerfully. I think some public notice should be taken of this good man. I wish the Congress would enable me to make him a present, and that some of our universities would confer upon him the degree of Doctor.

The Duke of Manchester, who has always been our friend in the House of Lords, is now here as Ambassador from England, I dine with him to-day, 26th, and if any thing of importance occurs, I will add it in a postscript. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, assure them of my faithful services, and believe me, to be, with great and sincere esteem, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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*Plan of a Treaty with Portugal.*

Plan of a Treaty of Amity and Commerce between Her Most Faithful Majesty the Queen of Portugal and Algarva, and the United States of North America.

Her Most Faithful Majesty the Queen of Portugal and Algarva, and the United States of North America, anxious to fix in an equitable and permanent manner the regulation which ought to be observed with regard to the commerce they wish to establish between their respective countries, conceive that they cannot more effectually attain this end than by observing, as the basis of their arrangement the most perfect equality and reciprocity, allowing each party the liberty of making such interior regulations respecting their commerce and navigation as may best suit them, resting the advantages of commerce on its reciprocal utility, and the laws of a just concurrence. In consequence of these principles and of a mature deliberation, her Most Faithful Majesty and the United States have agreed on the following articles :

## ARTICLE I.

There shall be a firm, inviolable, and universal peace, and a sincere amity between her Most Faithful Majesty the Queen of Portugal, her heirs and successors, and the United States of North America, as well with respect to the citizens and subjects of the said two parties as their people, islands, cities, and places situated within their respective jurisdictions, and between their people and inhabitants of all classes, without exception of persons and places, similar to what has been already established with the most favorite Powers.

## ARTICLE II.

The subjects of her Most Faithful Majesty may freely frequent and reside in the United States, and traffic in all kinds of effects and merchandizes, whose importation or exportation is not or shall not be prohibited; and they shall not pay in the ports, harbors, roads, countries, islands, cities, and places within the United States, other or greater duties or imposts of any kind whatever, than such as the most favored nations are, or shall be obliged to pay. And they shall enjoy all the rights, liberties, privileges, immunities, and exemptions with respect to trade, navigation, and commerce, whether in going from one port of the said States to another, or in going there, or returning from any part or to any part of the world whatever, which the said nations do or shall enjoy.

## ARTICLE III.

In the like manner the citizens and inhabitants of the United States of North America shall freely frequent and reside in the States of her Most Faithful Majesty in Europe; also in Madeira and the Azores, and trade there in all kinds of effects and merchandizes, the importation and exportation of which is not, or shall not be prohibited; and they shall not pay in the ports, harbors, roads, countries, islands, cities, and places of the Queen of Portugal, other or greater duties of any kind whatsoever than such as the most favored nations are, or shall be bound to pay; and they shall enjoy all the rights, liberties, privileges, immunities, and exemptions as to trade, navigation, and commerce, whether in going from one port of her Most Faithful Majesty's States to another, or in going there or returning from any



part of the world whatever, which the said nations do or shall enjoy.

## ARTICLE IV.

Her Most Faithful Majesty shall use every means in her power to protect and defend all the vessels and property belonging to the subjects, people, and inhabitants of the said United States, which shall be in her ports, harbors, or roads, against any violence whatever that may be committed by the subjects of her said Majesty, by punishing such as shall violate these principles.

## ARTICLE V.

The preceding article shall be in like manner reciprocally and exactly observed on the part of the United States, with respect to the vessels and property belonging to the subjects of her said Majesty, which shall be found in their ports, harbors, or roads, against any violence that may be committed by the subjects of the United States.

## ARTICLE VI.

If any squadrons or vessels of war touch at the ports, or enter into the seas in the neighborhood of her Most Faithful Majesty's States, they shall conform to the regulations already established with respect to the other most favored maritime Powers.

## ARTICLE VII.

The United States of America likewise oblige themselves reciprocally to observe with exactitude the stipulations contained in the above article.

## ARTICLE VIII.

It is likewise agreed and determined that every merchant, captains of merchant vessels, or other subjects of her Most Faithful Majesty, shall have entire liberty in all places within the dominion or jurisdiction of the United States of America, to manage themselves their own affairs, and to employ therein whomsoever they please, and that they shall not be obliged to make use of any interpreter or broker, nor to pay them any fee, unless they do employ them. Moreover, the masters of the vessels shall not be obliged, in loading or discharging their vessels, to employ workmen, appointed for that purpose by

public authority, but they shall be entirely free to discharge or load themselves their vessels, and to employ, in loading or discharging, such persons as they shall think proper for the purpose, without paying any fee under the title of salary, to any other person whatever; and they shall not be obliged to put any kind of merchandize in other vessels, or to receive them on board, and wait to be loaded any longer time than what they please; and all and every of the citizens, people, and inhabitants of the United States of America shall have, and shall reciprocally enjoy, the same privileges and liberties in all the aforesaid places within her Most Faithful Majesty's jurisdiction in Europe. And, as to what concerns contraband goods, which may be introduced in merchant vessels belonging to either nation, they shall be obliged to submit to the visit of the officers appointed in the two States, to prevent the said contraband, and for that purpose to conform to the established regulations, or such as shall be established within the respective States.

## ARTICLE IX.

Full and entire liberty of conscience shall be granted to the inhabitants and subjects of each party, and no one shall be molested with respect to his worship, provided he submits, as far as respects the public demonstration, to the laws of the country. The inhabitants and subjects of either party who shall die in the territory of the other party shall be permitted to be buried in suitable and decent places, which shall be assigned for that purpose; and the two contracting Powers shall provide, each within its own jurisdiction, that the respective subjects and inhabitants may obtain certificates of death, in case they shall be required to deliver them.

## ARTICLE X.

The subjects of the contracting parties may, within the respective States, freely dispose of their property, movable and immovable, either by testament, donation, or otherwise, in favor of such persons as they may think proper; and their heirs, wherever they may dwell, shall receive these successions, even *ab intestato*, either in person or by attorney, without the necessity of obtaining letters of naturalization. These inheritances, as well as the capitals and effects which the subjects of the two parties, in changing their residence, would

carry from the place of their abode, shall be exempted from any duties on the part of the Government of the two respective States. The contents of this article shall in no wise derogate from the ordinances published against emigrations, or which shall hereafter be promulgated within the dominions of the two Powers, the exercise of which they reserve to themselves.

## ARTICLE XI.

If, hereafter, a war should happen between Portugal and the United States, which God forbid, the space of nine months shall be granted to the merchants of either country residing at that time in the other, to collect their debts and put their affairs in order, and that they may depart with all their effects without let or molestation. All fishermen, farmers, artizans, or manufacturers, unarmed and residing in cities, places, and villages not fortified, who work for the subsistence and welfare of mankind, and who peaceably exercise their respective employments, shall be allowed to continue their occupations without molestation from the armed forces of the enemy, in whose power they may fall through the events of war; but should it be necessary to take any thing from them for the use of the army, they shall be paid for them at a reasonable price. All traders and merchants, whose vessels shall not be armed for war, but employed in the commerce of exchanging the productions of different countries, and thereby rendering the wants, conveniences, and comforts of life easier to be obtained and more universal, shall be permitted to pass freely, and without molestation. Neither of the contracting Powers shall grant a commission to any privateer, authorizing it to take or destroy such merchant vessels, or to interrupt such commerce.

## ARTICLE XII.

In order to remove and prevent on both sides every difficulty and misunderstanding, that commonly happen respecting merchandize heretofore denominated contraband, and which shall be judged such by the Powers of Europe in their respective treaties, that is to say, arms and warlike stores, it has been agreed, that in case where one of the contracting parties shall be engaged in a war against any other nation, none of these articles carried in the vessels, or by the subjects of one of the parties to the enemies of the other, shall be considered

contraband under any pretext whatever, nor be confiscated or taken away as such from any individual. It shall, nevertheless, be lawful to stop such vessels, and to detain them as long as the captors shall think necessary to prevent the inconveniences or damages that may result from the continuation of their voyage, by paying, however, to the proprietors a reasonable compensation for the loss which such detention may occasion ; moreover, the captors shall be permitted to use, in whole or in part, the warlike stores thus detained, provided that they pay the full value thereof to the proprietors.

## ARTICLE XIII.

All vessels and merchandize of whatsoever kind that shall be recovered from pirates of the high seas, shall be brought into some port of one of the two States and delivered to the care of the officers of the said port, in order that they may be completely restored to their true proprietor, as soon as he shall have duly and sufficiently proved his property.

## ARTICLE XIV.

None of her Most Faithful Majesty's subjects shall take a commission or letter of marque to arm any vessel or vessels for the purpose of acting as privateers against the United States, or any of them, or against their subjects, people, or inhabitants, or against their property, or that of the inhabitants of either of them, from any prince whatever with whom the said States shall be at war. In like manner, no citizen, or subject, or inhabitant of the aforesaid United States, or any of them, shall demand any commission or letter of marque to arm any vessel or vessels to cruise against the subjects of Her Most Faithful Majesty, or any of them, or their property, from any prince or State whatever with whom the said Queen shall be at war ; and if any one belonging to either nation takes such commission or letter of marque, he shall be punished as a pirate.

## ARTICLE XV.

In case the vessels, subjects, and inhabitants of one of the two contracting parties shall approach the coasts of the other, without designing, however, to enter into the port, or, after having entered, without intention to discharge their cargo, or to break bulk, they

shall be at liberty to depart or to pursue their voyage without molestation.

ARTICLE XVI.

It is stipulated by the present treaty, that free vessels shall secure the liberty of the persons who shall be on board, even should they be the enemies of one of the two contracting parties, and they shall not be taken out of the said vessels unless they are military characters, and actually in the enemy's service.

ARTICLE XVII.

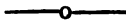
The two contracting parties mutually grant permission to maintain in their respective ports consuls, vice-consuls, agents, and commissaries, whose functions shall be regulated by a particular convention, whenever either party may be pleased to establish it.

ARTICLE XVIII.

The present treaty shall be ratified on both sides, and the ratifications shall be exchanged in the space of eight months, or sooner if possible, reckoning from the date of the signature.

ARTICLE XIX.

Her Most Faithful Majesty the Queen of Portugal and Algarva, and the United States of North America, agree that the present treaty shall be in full force, reckoning from the date of its ratification, and the two contracting parties reciprocally promise to observe it exactly.



FROM THE POPE'S NUNCIO TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

The Apostolical Nuncio has the honor to send Mr. Franklin the enclosed note, which he requests he will be pleased to forward to the Congress of the United States of North America, and support it with his credit.

*July 28th, 1783.*

NOTE.

Before the Revolution, which has just been completed in North America, the Catholics and missionaries of those Provinces depended,

as to their spiritual concerns, on the Apostolical Vicar, resident in London. It is well known that this arrangement can no longer exist ; but as it is essential that the Catholic subjects of the United States should have an ecclesiastic to govern them in their religious concerns, the congregation *de Propagandâ Fide*, existing at Rome for the establishment and conservation of missions, has come to the determination of proposing to Congress to establish, in some city of the United States of North America, one of their Catholic subjects, with the powers of Apostolical Vicar, and in the character of Bishop, or simply in quality of Apostolical Prefect.

The establishment of an Apostolical Vicar Bishop appears the most eligible, the more so as the Catholic subjects of the United States would find themselves in a situation to receive confirmation and orders in their own country, without being obliged to go for that purpose to the country of a foreign Power. And as it might sometimes happen, that among the subjects of the United States there might be no person in a situation to be charged with the spiritual government, either as Bishop or Apostolical Prefect, it would be necessary, in such circumstances, that Congress should consent to choose him from among the subjects of a foreign nation the most friendly with the United States.



TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, August 16th, 1783.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform your Excellency, that the English Ministry do not agree to any of the propositions that have been made either by us or by their Minister here ; and they have sent over a plan for the definitive treaty, which consists merely of the preliminaries formerly signed, with a short introductory paragraph, and another at the conclusion, confirming and establishing the said preliminary articles. My colleagues seem inclined to sign this with Mr. Hartley, and so to finish the affair.

I am, with respect, sir, your Excellency's, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

M. DE RAYNEVAL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, August 29th, 1783.

Sir,

I have informed the Count de Vergennes of the difficulty which Mr. Hartley has made to signing at Versailles, and this Minister has directed me to say, that nothing ought to prevent your signing at Paris on Wednesday next, the day proposed for the signature of the other treaties; but I request you to fix the hour with Mr. Hartley at nine o'clock in the morning, and to send here an express immediately after your signature is completed.

M. de Vergennes is desirous of being informed of the completion of your labors at the same time with his own. You receive for Wednesday a note of invitation, as well as for your colleagues and Mr. Hartley; I presume that the latter will make no difficulty.

I have the honor to be, sir, with perfect consideration, your most obedient humble servant,

DE RAYNEVAL.

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 TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, August 31st, 1783.

Sir,

After a continued course of treating for nine months, the English Ministry have at length come to a resolution to lay aside, for the present, all the new propositions that have been made and agreed to, their own as well as ours; and they offer to sign again, as a definitive treaty, the articles of November the 30th, 1782, the ratifications of which have already been exchanged. We have agreed to this; and on Wednesday next, the third of September, it will be signed, with all the definitive treaties, establishing a general peace, which may God long continue.

I am, with great respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—○—

 TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, September 6th, 1783.

My dear Friend,

Enclosed is my letter to Mr. Fox. I beg you would assure him

that my expressions of esteem for him are not mere professions. I really think him a *great* man, and I would not think so if I did not believe he was at bottom, and would prove himself a *good* one. Guard him against mistaken notions of the American people. You have deceived yourselves too long with vain expectations of reaping advantage from our little discontents. We are more thoroughly an enlightened people, with respect to our political interests, than perhaps any other under Heaven. Every man among us reads, and is so easy in his circumstances as to have leisure for conversations of improvement and for acquiring information. Our domestic misunderstandings, when we have them, are of small extent, though monstrously magnified by your microscopic newspapers. He who judges from them that we are on the point of falling into anarchy, or returning to the obedience of Britain, is like one who being shown some spots in the sun should fancy that the whole disk would soon be overspread with them, and that there would be an end of daylight. The great body of intelligence among our people surrounds and overpowers our petty dissensions, as the sun's great mass of fire diminishes and destroys his spots. Do not, therefore, any longer delay the evacuation of New York, in the vain hope of a new revolution in your favor, if such a hope has indeed had any effect in occasioning the delay. It is now nine months since the evacuations were promised. You expect with reason, that the people of New York should do your merchants justice in the payment of their old debts; consider the injustice you do them in keeping them so long out of their habitations, and out of their business, by which they might have been enabled to make payment. There is no truth more clear to me than this, that the great interests of our two countries is a thorough reconciliation. Restraints on the freedom of commerce and intercourse between us can afford no advantage equivalent to the mischief they will do, by keeping up ill-humor and promoting a total alienation. Let you and me, my dear friend, do our best towards advancing and securing that reconciliation. We can do nothing that will in a dying hour afford us more solid satisfaction.

I wish you a prosperous journey, and a happy sight of your friends. Present my best respects to your good brother and sister, and believe me ever, with sincere and great esteem, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, September 10th, 1783.

Sir,

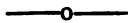
I have received a letter from a very respectable person in America, containing the following words, viz :

“ It is confidently reported, propagated, and believed by some among us, that the Court of France was at the bottom against our obtaining the fishery and territory in that great extent, in which both are secured to us by the treaty ; that our Minister at that Court favored, or did not oppose this design against us, and that it was entirely owing to the firmness, sagacity, and disinterestedness of Mr. Adams, with whom Mr. Jay united, that we have obtained these important advantages.”

It is not my purpose to dispute any share of the honor of that treaty, which the friends of my colleagues may be disposed to give them, but having now spent fifty years of my life in public offices and trusts, and having still one ambition left, that of carrying the character of fidelity at least to the grave with me, I cannot allow that I was behind any of them in zeal and faithfulness. I therefore think that I ought not to suffer an accusation, which falls little short of treason to my country, to pass without notice, when the means of effectual vindication are at hand. You, sir, were a witness of my conduct in that affair. To you and my other colleagues I appeal, by sending to each a similar letter with this, and I have no doubt of your readiness to do a brother Commissioner justice, by certificates, that will entirely destroy the effect of that accusation.

I have the honor to be, with much esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



JOHN JAY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Passy, September 11th, 1783.

Sir,

I have been favored with your letter of yesterday, and will answer it explicitly. I have no reason whatever to believe that you were averse to our obtaining the full extent of boundary and fishery secured to us by the treaty. Your conduct respecting them throughout the

negociation indicated a strong, a steady attachment to both those objects, and in my opinion promoted the attainment of them.

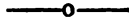
I remember, that in a conversation, which M. de Rayneval, the first Secretary of Count de Vergennes, had with you and me, in the summer of 1782, you contended for our full right to the fishery, and argued it on various principles.

Your letters to me, when in Spain, considered our territory as extending to the Mississippi, and expressed your opinion against ceding the navigation of that river in very strong and pointed terms.

In short, sir, I do not recollect the least difference in sentiment between us respecting the boundaries or fisheries. On the contrary, we were unanimous and united in adhering to and insisting on them. Nor did I perceive the least disposition in either of us to recede from our claims, or be satisfied with less than we obtained.

I have the honor to be, with great respect and esteem, &c.,\*

JOHN JAY.



JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, September 13th, 1783.

Sir,

I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 10th of this month, in which you say you have received a letter from a very respectable person in America containing the following words, viz: "It is confidently reported, propagated, and believed by some among us, that the Court of France was at the bottom against our obtaining the fishery and territory in that great extent in which both are secured to us by the treaty; that our Minister at that Court favored, or did not oppose this design against us, and that it was entirely owing to the firmness, sagacity, and disinterestedness of Mr. Adams, with whom Mr. Jay united, that we have obtained those important advantages."

It is unnecessary for me to say any thing upon this subject, more than to quote the words which I wrote in the evening of the 30th of November, 1782, and which have been received and read in Congress, viz: "As soon as I arrived in Paris, I waited on Mr. Jay,

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\* See other letters from Mr. Jay, respecting Dr. Franklin, above, pp. 369, 370.

and learned from him the rise and progress of the negociation. Nothing that has happened since the beginning of the controversy in 1761, has ever struck me more forcibly or affected me more intimately, than the entire coincidence of principles and opinion between him and me. In about three days I went out to Passy, and spent the evening with Dr. Franklin, and entered largely into conversation with him upon the course and present state of our foreign affairs. I told him my opinion without reserve of the policy of this Court, and of the principles, wisdom, and firmness with which Mr. Jay had conducted the negociation in his sickness and my absence, and that I was determined to support Mr. Jay to the utmost of my power in pursuit of the same system. The Doctor heard me patiently and said nothing."

"The first conference we had afterwards with Mr. Oswald in considering one point and another, Dr. Franklin turned to Mr. Jay and said, 'I am of your opinion, and will go on with these gentlemen without consulting this Court.' He has accordingly met us in most of our conferences, and has gone on with us in entire harmony and unanimity throughout, and has been able and useful, both by his sagacity and reputation, in the whole negociation."\*

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir,

JOHN ADAMS.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, September 13th, 1783.

Sir,

I received a few days since the private letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me of the 13th of June. I regret with you the resignation of the late Secretary. Your present cares are increased by it, and it will be difficult to find a successor of equal abilities.

We found no difficulty in decyphering the resolution of Congress. The Commissioners have taken no notice of it in our public letter.

I am happy to hear that both the device and workmanship of the medal are approved with you, as they have the good fortune to be by

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\* For further information on this subject, and particularly for an account of the part taken by Dr. Franklin in the negociation before he was joined by Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, see the *North American Review* for January, 1830, p. 15 *et seq.*

the best judges on this side of the water. It has been esteemed a well-timed as well as a well-merited compliment here, and has its good effects. Since the two first, which you mention as received, I have sent by different opportunities so many as that every member of Congress might have one. I hope they are come safe to hand by this time.

I wrote a long letter to Mr. Livingston by Mr. Barney, to which I beg leave to refer, enclosing a copy.

We had, before signing the definitive treaty, received the ratification of the preliminary articles by his Britannic Majesty, exchanged with us by Mr. Hartley for that of the Congress. I send herewith a copy of the first and last clauses.

In a former letter I mentioned the volunteer proceedings of a merchant at Alicant, towards obtaining a treaty between us and the Emperor of Morocco. We have since received a letter from a person who says, as you will see by the copy enclosed, that he is sent by the Emperor to be the bearer of his answer to the United States, and that he is arrived in Spain on his way to Paris. He has not yet appeared here, and we hardly know what answer to give him. I hope the sending a Minister to that Court, as recommended in my last, has been taken into consideration, or at least that some instructions respecting that nation have been sent to your Minister in Spain, who is better situated than we are for such a negociation.\*

The Minister from Denmark often speaks to me about the proposed treaty, of which a copy went by Mr. Barney. No commission to sign it, nor any instructions from Congress relating to it, are yet arrived; and though pressed, I have not ventured to do any thing further in the affair.

I forward herewith a letter to the Congress from the city of Hamburg.† I understand that a good disposition towards us prevails there, which it may be well to encourage.

No answer has yet been given me from the Court of Portugal, respecting the plan of a treaty concerted between its Ambassador here and me. He has been unwell and much in the country, so that I have not seen him lately. I suspect that the false or exaggerated reports of the distracted situation of our Government, industriously propagated throughout Europe by our enemies, have

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\* See p. 462 of this volume.

† See p. 427.

made an impression in that kingdom to our disadvantage, and inclined them to hesitate in forming a connexion with us. Questions asked me, and observations made by several of the foreign Ministers here, convince me that the idle stories of our disunion, contempt of authority, refusal to pay taxes, &c., have been too much credited, and been very injurious to our reputation.

I sent before a copy of the letter I wrote to the Grand Master of Malta, with a present of our medal. With this you will have a copy of his answer.\* I send also a copy of a note I received from the Pope's Nuncio.† He is very civil on all occasions, and has mentioned the possibility of an advantageous trade America might have with the Ecclesiastical State, which he says has two good ports, Civita Vecchia and ———.

This Court continues favorable to us. Count de Vergennes was resolute in refusing to sign the definitive treaty with England before ours was signed. The English Ministers were offended, but complied. I am convinced that Court will never cease endeavoring to disunite us. We shall, I hope, be constantly on our guard against those machinations, for our safety consists in a steady adherence to our friends, and our reputation in a faithful regard to treaties, and in a grateful conduct towards our benefactors.

I send herewith sundry memorials recommended to my care by Count de Vergennes, viz: one respecting a claim of Messieurs. Fosters, of Bordeaux, one of M. Pequet, and one of M. Bayard. The Congress will take such notice of them as they shall think proper.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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TO LEWIS R. MORRIS.‡

Passy, September 14th, 1783.

Sir,

I received by the Washington the bills and accounts mentioned in yours of the 5th of June, and shall soon send you an account of the disposition of the money.

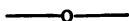
\* See p. 445.

† See p. 478.

‡ Mr. Morris was a Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

My account as stated by you appears to be correct. With much esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



## DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Bath, September 24th, 1783.

My dear Friend,

I am at present at Bath, with my dearest sister, whom I found as well as I could have expected, and I hope with reasonable prospect of recovery in time. I have seen my friends in the Ministry, and I hope things will go on well; with them I am sure it is all right and firm. The chief part of the Cabinet Ministers are out of town, but there will be a full cabinet held in a few days, in which a specific proposition, in the nature of a temporary convention, will be given in instructions to me—I imagine nearly upon the ground of my memorial of May 19th, 1783, which I delivered to the American Ministers, viz: “American ships not to bring foreign manufactures into Great Britain, nor to trade directly between the British West Indies and Great Britain;” all the rest to be as before the war. I expect that something to this effect will be their determination in the affair, and if it should be so, I shall hope not to meet with difficulty on your parts. I want to see some specific beginning. As to any further proposition respecting the trade between Great Britain and the British West Indies, I doubt whether any such can be discussed before the meeting of Parliament. I wish to look forward not only to the continuation of peace between our two countries, but to the improvement of reconciliation into alliance, and therefore I wish the two parties to be disposed to accommodate each other, without the strict account by weights and scales, as between aliens and strangers, actuated towards each other by no other principle than cold and equalizing indifference. Friendly dispositions presumed have their fairest chance of being realized, but if we should set out presuming against them, the good which might have happened may be prevented. Pray remember me to your three colleagues, and to all friends.

Yours, ever most affectionately,

D. HARTLEY.

P. S. I have put in a word for our Quaker article, and I hope with some impression.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, September 27th, 1783.

Sir,

Mr. Thaxter, late secretary of Mr. Adams, who is charged with all our despatches that were intended to go by the French packet boat, writes from L'Orient, that though he arrived there two days before the time appointed for her sailing, he missed reaching her by four hours; but another light vessel was fitting, and would sail the 21st instant, in which he hoped to arrive at New York nearly as soon as the packet. We shall send duplicates by the next from hence.

In the mean time I enclose a printed copy of the definitive treaty, which I hear is ratified. Indeed we have the ratification of the preliminaries.

Mr. Hartley, when he left us, expected to return in three weeks in order to proceed with us in forming a treaty of commerce. The new commission that was intended for us is not yet come to hand.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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 TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, October 16th, 1783.

My dear Friend,

I have nothing material to write to you respecting public affairs, but I cannot let Mr. Adams, who will see you, go without a line to inquire after your welfare, to inform you of mine, and assure you of my constant respect and attachment.

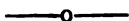
I think with you, that your Quaker article is a good one, and that men will in time have sense enough to adopt it, but I fear that time is not yet come.

What would you think of a proposition, if I should make it, of a compact between England, France, and America? America would be as happy as the Sabine girls, if she could be the means of uniting in perpetual peace her father and her husband. What repeated follies are those repeated wars! You do not want to conquer and govern one another. Why, then, should you be continually employed in injuring and destroying one another? How many excellent things might have been done to promote the internal welfare of each country; what bridges, roads, canals, and other useful public works

and institutions, tending to the common felicity, might have been made and established with the money and men foolishly spent during the last seven centuries by our mad wars in doing one another mischief! You are near neighbors and each have very respectable qualities. Learn to be quiet and to respect each other's rights. You are all Christians. One is *The Most Christian King*, and the other *Defender of the Faith*. Manifest the propriety of these titles by your future conduct. "By this," says Christ, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." Seek peace, and insure it.

Adieu, yours, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



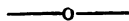
TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, October 22d, 1783.

I received my dear friend's kind letter of the 4th instant from Bath with your proposed temporary convention, which you desire me to show to my colleagues. They are both by this time in London, where you will undoubtedly see and converse with them on the subject. The apprehension you mention, that the cement of the confederation may be annihilated, &c., has not, I think, any foundation. There is sense enough in America to take care of their own China vase. I see much in your papers about our divisions and distractions, but I hear little of them from America; and I know that most of the letters said to come from there with such accounts are mere London fictions. I will consider attentively the proposition above mentioned, against the return of my colleagues, when I hope our commission will have arrived.

I rejoice to hear that your dear sister's recovery advances, and that your brother is well. Please to present my affectionate respects to them, and believe me ever yours, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, November 1st, 1783.

Sir,

Enclosed is a copy of my last, which went by the English packet. I heard after I wrote it, that the French packet putting back by



contrary winds, Mr. Thaxter had an opportunity of getting on board her, and that she sailed the 26th of September.

The mentioned new commission is not yet come to hand. Mr. Hartley is not returned, and I hear will stay for the meeting of Parliament, which is to be the 11th instant, and he will not come hither till the recess for the Christmas holidays. Mr. Jay went to England about three weeks since on some personal affairs; and Mr. Adams followed last week to see that country, and take some exercise during this vacancy of business.

This Court is now at Fontainebleau, but will return to Versailles in a few days. Its good disposition towards us continues. The late failure of payment in the Caisse d'Escompte, an institution similar to the Bank of England, occasioned partly by its having gone too far in assisting the Government with money, and the inability of the Government to support their credit, though extremely desirous of doing it, is a fresh proof that our not obtaining a further loan was not occasioned by want of good will to assist us, as some have unjustly supposed, but by a real want of the means. Money is at present unaccountably scarce here; what is arrived and expected in Spain since the peace, it is thought will set things right. The Government has proposed a second lottery for this year, by which they borrow twenty-four millions, and it is filled readily. This helps, and the Caisse d'Escompte goes on again with its operations, but it is said the interest paid by the lottery plan is nearly seven per cent.

I have received the duplicates of your Excellency's letter of the 15th of July, to the Commissioners, which is very satisfactory, though it came to hand but lately. The first sent, via New York, has not yet appeared. I have sent copies of it to the Hague and Madrid. The substance is published in several papers.

I have acquainted the Minister of Sweden that I have received the ratification of the treaty, and he has written to me that he shall be in town in a few days, when he will make the exchange. The conclusion of the Danish treaty waits only for the commission and instructions from Congress. The Ambassador of Portugal informed me lately, that his Court had our proposed plan under consideration, and that we should soon hear from them. I sent it to Congress by Barney, and hear the ship has arrived. A commission and instructions will be wanting for that also, should the Congress be disposed to conclude a treaty with that nation.

I see by the public prints that the Congress have ratified the contract I made with the Minister here, respecting the loans and aids we had received, but the ratification itself, though directed to be sent to me, has never come to hand, and I am often asked for it. I beg it may be forwarded by the first opportunity.

There has been with me lately M. Pierre du Calvet, a merchant of Montreal, who, when our army was in Canada, furnished our generals and officers with many things they wanted, taking their receipts and promissory notes for payment; and when the English repossessed the country, he was imprisoned, and his estate seized, on account of the services he had rendered us. He has shown me the originals of his papers, which I think are genuine. He produced also a quantity of Congress paper, which he says he received in payment for some of the supplies, and which appeared to me of our first emissions, and yet all fresh and clean, as having passed through no other hands. When he was discharged from prison, he could not obtain permission to go into the United States to claim the debt, but was allowed to go to England; and from thence he came hither to solicit payment from me. Having no authority to meddle with such debts, and the sum being considerable, I refused, and advised him to take passage for America, and make his application to Congress. He said he was grown old, much broken and wearied by near three years' imprisonment, and that the voyage from Canada to London had like to have been too much for him, he being sick all the way; so that he could not think of another, though distressed for want of his money. He appears an honest man, and his case a hard one. I have therefore undertaken to forward his papers, and I beg leave to recommend them to the speedy consideration of Congress, to whom I request you would be pleased to present my dutiful respects, and assure them of my most faithful services.

With great esteem and regard, &c., B. FRANKLIN.

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GIACOMO FRANCISCO CROCCO TO B. FRANKLIN.

Cadiz, November 25th, 1783.

Sir,

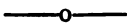
On the 15th of July last, I had the honor to acquaint your Excellency of my arrival in Europe, and that I was appointed by

his Majesty the Emperor of Morocco, bearer of this answer to the Congress Sovereign of the Thirteen United States of North America, and that, according to my instructions, I was to meet at Paris the Ambassador that would be appointed by the Congress to sign at the Court of Morocco the treaty of peace and commerce, agreeably to the proposals made to his Imperial Majesty, by Robert Montgomery, in his letter dated at Alicant, the 4th of January, 1783. Since, I have been at the Court of Madrid, where I had some commissions from the Emperor, and to see the execution of them I came to this place, from whence I intend to embark in three or four months for Barbary, unless in the mean time I should receive an answer from your Excellency, with orders that Mr. Richard Harrison should give me for my travelling charges fifteen hundred hard dollars, although the Courts of Europe are accustomed to allow the Ministers of my master at the rate of ten pounds sterling per day, while they are in Europe, to defray their expenses, besides presents for their good offices in those important affairs.

His Imperial Majesty was graciously pleased at my solicitation to agree, at the request of Congress, to grant them a treaty of peace, (which other Powers in Europe could not obtain but after many years,) and my return without the full execution of his commands I apprehend may forever indispose him against the United Provinces.

I remain most truly, sir, &c.,

GIACOMO FRANCISCO CROCCO.



TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

My dear Friend,

Passy, December 15th, 1783.

I am much concerned to find by your letter to my grandson, that you are hurt by my long silence, and that you ascribe it to a supposed diminution of my friendship. Believe me, that is by no means the case, but I am too much harassed by a variety of correspondence, together with gout and gravel, which induce me to postpone doing what I often fully intend to do, and particularly writing, where the urgent necessity of business does not seem to require its being done immediately, my sitting too much at the desk having already almost killed me; besides, since Mr. Jay's residence here, I imagined he might keep you fully informed of what was

material for you to know, and I beg you to be assured of my constant and sincere esteem and affection.

I do not know whether you have been informed, that a Mr. Montgomery, who lives at Alicant, took upon himself (for I think he had no authority) to make overtures last winter in behalf of our States, towards a treaty with the Emperor of Morocco. In consequence of his proceedings I received a letter in August, from a person who acquainted me, that he was arrived in Spain by the Emperor's order, and was to come to Paris, there to receive and conduct to Morocco the Minister of Congress appointed to make that treaty, intimating at the same time an expectation of money to defray his expenses. I communicated the letter to Mr. Jay. The conduct of Mr. Montgomery appeared to us very extraordinary and irregular, and the idea of a messenger from Morocco coming to Paris to meet and conduct a Minister of Congress appearing absurd and extravagant, as well as the demand of money by a person unknown, I made no answer to the letter, and I know not whether Mr. Jay made any to Mr. Montgomery, who wrote about the same time. But I have lately received another letter from the same person, a copy of which I enclose, together with my answer open for your perusal, and it is submitted to your discretion whether to forward it or not. The Mr. Crocco, who writes to me, having been, as he says, at Madrid, you possibly may know more of him than I can, and judge whether he is really a person in credit with the Emperor, and sent as he pretends to be, or not rather an *Escroc*, as the French call cheats and impostors.

I would not be wanting in any thing proper for me to do towards keeping that Prince in good humor with us, till the pleasure of Congress is known, and therefore would answer Mr. Crocco if he be in his employ; but am loth to commit myself in correspondence with a *Fripon*. It will be strange if, being at Madrid, he did not address himself to you.

With great and unalterable regard, I am ever, my dear friend,  
yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

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TO GIACOMO FRANCISCO CROCCO.

Sir,

Passy, December 15th, 1783.

I have just received the letter you did me the honor of writing to

me the 25th past. I did indeed receive your former letter of July, but being totally a stranger to the mentioned proceedings of Mr. Montgomery, and having no orders from Congress on the subject, I knew not how to give you any satisfactory answer till I should receive further information; and I communicated your letter to Mr. Jay, Minister of the United States for Spain, in whose district Mr. Montgomery is, and who is more at hand than I am for commencing that negociation.

Mr. Jay, who is at present in England, has possibly written to you, though his letter may have miscarried, to acquaint you that Mr. Montgomery had probably no authority from Congress to take the step he has done, and that it was not likely that they, desiring to make a treaty with the Emperor, would think of putting his Majesty to the trouble of sending a person to Paris to receive and conduct their Minister, since they have ships, and could easily land him at Cadiz, or present him at one of the Emperor's ports. We have, however, written to Congress, acquainting them with what we had been informed, of the good and favorable disposition of his Imperial Majesty to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States, and we have no doubt but that as soon as their affairs are a little settled, which, by so severe a war carried on in the bowels of their country, by one of the most powerful nations of Europe, have necessarily been much deranged, they will readily manifest equally good dispositions, and take all the proper steps to cultivate and secure the friendship of a monarch, whose character I know they have long esteemed and respected.

I am, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Sir,

Passy, December 25th, 1783.

Not having heard of the appointment of a new Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I take the liberty of addressing this despatch directly to your Excellency. I received by Captain Barney a letter from the late President directed to the Commissioners, dated November the 1st, with a set of instructions, dated the 29th of October, a resolution of the same date respecting Hamburg, and another of the 1st of November, relating to Captain Paul Jones, all which will be duly regarded.

Captain Jones, in passing through England, communicated these papers to Mr. Adams then at London. Mr. Adams, disappointed in not finding among them the commission we had been made to expect empowering us to make a treaty of commerce with England, wrote to me, that he imagined it might be contained in a packet that was directed to me, and requested to be immediately informed, adding, that in case no such commission was come he should depart directly for Holland; so I suppose he is now there. Mr. Laurens is gone to England with an intention of embarking soon for America. Mr. Jay is at Bath, but expected here daily. The English Ministers, the Duke of Manchester, and Mr. Hartley, are both at present in Parliament. As soon as either of them returns, we shall endeavor to obtain an additional article to the treaty, explaining that mentioned in the instructions.

The affairs of Ireland are still unsettled. The Parliament and volunteers are at variance; the latter are uneasy, that in the late negotiations for a treaty of commerce between England and America the British Ministers had made no mention of Ireland, and they seem to desire a separate treaty of commerce between America and that kingdom.

It was certainly disagreeable to the English Ministers that all their treaties for peace were carried on under the eye of the French Court. This began to appear towards the conclusion, when Mr. Hartley refused going to Versailles to sign there with the other Powers our definitive treaty, and insisted on its being done at Paris, which we in good humor complied with, but at an earlier hour, that we might have time to acquaint Count de Vergennes before he was to sign with the Duke of Manchester.

The Dutch definitive treaty was not then ready, and the British Court now insists on finishing it either at London or the Hague. If, therefore, the commission to us, which has been so long delayed, is still intended, perhaps it will be well to instruct us to treat either here or at London, as we may find most convenient.

The treaty may be conducted, even there, in concert and in the confidence of communication with the Ministers of our friends, whose advice may be of use to us.

With respect to the British Court, we should, I think, be constantly upon our guard, and impress strongly upon our minds, that though it has made peace with us, it is not in truth reconciled either to us, or to

its loss of us, but still flatters itself with hopes that some change in the affairs of Europe, or some disunion among ourselves, may afford them an opportunity of recovering their dominion, punishing those who have most offended, and securing our future dependence. It is easy to see by the general turn of the ministerial newspapers, (light things, indeed, as straws and feathers, but like them they show which way the wind blows,) and by the malignant improvement their Ministers make, in all the foreign Courts, of every little accident or dissension among us, the riot of a few soldiers at Philadelphia, the resolves of some town meetings, the reluctance to pay taxes, &c., all which are exaggerated, to represent our Government as so many anarchies, of which the people themselves are weary, and the Congress as having lost its influence, being no longer respected. I say it is easy to see from this conduct, that they bear us no good will, and that they wish the reality of what they are pleased to imagine. They have, too, a numerous royal progeny to provide for, some of whom are educated in the military line. In these circumstance we cannot be too careful to preserve the friendships we have acquired abroad, and the union we have established at home, to secure our credit by a punctual discharge of our obligations of every kind, and our reputation by the wisdom of our councils; since we know not how soon we may have a fresh occasion for friends, for credit, and for reputation.

The extravagant misrepresentations of our political state in foreign countries made it appear necessary to give them better information, which I thought could not be more effectually and authentically done, than by publishing a translation into French, now the most general language in Europe, of the Book of Constitutions which had been printed by order of Congress. This I accordingly got well done, and presented two copies handsomely bound to every foreign Minister here, the one for himself, the other, more elegant, for his Sovereign. It has been well taken, and has afforded matter of surprise to many, who had conceived mean ideas of the state of civilization in America, and could not have expected so much political knowledge and sagacity had existed in our wilderness. And from all parts I have the satisfaction to hear that our constitutions in general are much admired. I am persuaded that this step will not only tend to promote the emigration to our country of substantial people from all parts of Europe, by the numerous copies I shall disperse, but will facilitate our future treaties with foreign Courts, who could not

before know what kind of government and people they had to treat with. As in doing this I have endeavored to further the apparent views of Congress in the first publication, I hope it may be approved, and the expense allowed. I send herewith one of the copies.

Our treaties with Denmark and Portugal remain unfinished, for want of instructions respecting them from Congress, and a commission empowering some Minister or Ministers to conclude them. The Emperor of Morocco, we understand, has expressed a disposition to make a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States. A Mr. Montgomery, who is a merchant settled at Alicant, has been, it seems, rather forward in proposing a negociation, without authority for so doing, and has embarrassed us a little, as may be seen by some letters I enclose.\* Perhaps it would be well for the Congress to send a message to that Prince, expressing their respect and regard for him, till such time as they may judge it convenient to appoint an Ambassador in form, furnished with proper presents to make a treaty with him. The other Barbary States, too, seem to require consideration, if we propose to carry on any trade in the Mediterranean; but whether the security of that trade is of sufficient importance to be worth purchasing at the rate of the tributes usually exacted by those piratical States, is a matter of doubt, on which I cannot at present form a judgment.

I shall immediately proceed, in pursuance of the first instruction, to take the proper steps for acquainting his Imperial Majesty of Germany with the dispositions of Congress, having some reason to believe the overture may be acceptable. His Minister here is of late extremely civil to me, and we are on very good terms. I have likewise an intimate friend at that Court.

With respect to other Powers, it seems best not to make advances at present, but to meet and encourage them when made, which I shall not fail to do, as I have already done those of Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal. Possibly Hamburg, to whom I have forwarded the letter of Congress, may send a Minister to America if they wish for a treaty, to conclude it there. They have no Minister here.

I have lately received a memorial from the Minister of Denmark, respecting a ship of that nation, the *Providentia*, taken by one of our

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\* The letters from G. F. Crocco, see pp. 463 and 491.



privateers and carried into Boston. I enclose a copy of it, and request to be furnished with directions and informations for the answer. It may be well to send me a copy of the proceedings in the courts. From a perusal of the papers communicated with it, I am satisfied that the cargo was clearly British property.

We have hitherto entered into no engagements respecting the armed neutrality, and, in obedience to the fifth instruction, we shall take care to avoid them hereafter. The treaty between this Court and the United States for regulating the powers, privileges, &c., of consuls, is at length completed, and is transcribing in order to be signed. I hope to transmit a copy by the next packet. I have received the Congress ratification of the two money treaties, which will be soon exchanged, when I shall send copies of them with that of Sweden.

I have given, and shall continue to give, Captain Paul Jones all the assistance in my power towards recovering the prize money; and I hope it may soon be accomplished.

When Mr. Jay returns I shall desire him to make the inquiry directed in the fourth instruction, respecting the expedition under that Commodore, and report thereon to Congress. In the mean time I can answer respecting one of the questions, that the King paid the whole expense, and that no part of it has ever been placed to the account of Congress. There exists indeed a demand of one Puchelberg, a person in the employ of M. Schweighauser, of about thirty thousand livres, for provisions and other things furnished to Captain Landais, after he took the Alliance out of the hands of Captain Jones; but as the ship was at that time under the King's supply, who having borrowed her for the expedition when fitted for sea, and just ready to sail with Mr. Adams, had ordered her to be delivered in the same condition free of all charges accrued, or accruing, by her being in Holland and in L' Orient, and as M. Puchelberg had not only no orders from me to furnish Captain Landais, but acted contrary to my orders given to M. Schweighauser, and contrary to the orders of M. Schweighauser himself, I refused to pay his account, which besides appeared extravagant, and it has never yet been paid.

I shall do my best in executing the third instruction, respecting our claim upon Denmark. I have written to London to obtain, if possible, an account of the sums insured upon the ships delivered up, as such an account may be some guide in the valuation of the prizes.

A Captain Williams, formerly in the British service, and employed upon the lakes, has given me a paper containing information of the state of the back country. As those informations may possibly be of some use, I send herewith the paper. Mr. Carmichael has sent me the accounts of the money transactions at Madrid. As soon as Mr. Jay returns they will be examined.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services.

With great esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Passy, December 25th, 1783.

Sir,

The remissness of our people in paying taxes is highly blameable, the unwillingness to pay them is still more so. I see in some resolutions of town meetings, a remonstrance against giving Congress a power to take, as they call it, *the people's money* out of their pockets though only to pay the interest and principal of debts duly contracted. They seem to mistake the point. Money justly due from the people is their creditor's money, and no longer the money of the people, who if they withhold it should be compelled to pay by some law. All property indeed, except the savage's temporary cabin, his bow, his matchuat, and other little acquisitions absolutely necessary for his subsistence, seems to me to be the creature of public convention. Hence the public has the right of regulating descents, and all other conveyances of property, and even of limiting the quantity and uses of it. All the property that is necessary to a man for the conservation of the individual, and the propagation of the species, is his natural right, which none can justly deprive him of; but all property superfluous to such purposes is the property of the public, who by their laws have created it, and who may therefore by other laws dispose of it whenever the welfare of the public shall desire such disposition. He that does not like civil society on these terms, let him retire and live among the savages. He can have no right to the benefits of society, who will not pay his club towards the support of it.

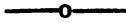
The Marquis de la Fayette, who loves to be employed in our

affairs, and is often very useful, has lately had several conversations with the Ministers and persons concerned in forming new regulations respecting the commerce between our two countries, which are not yet concluded. I thought it therefore well to communicate to him a copy of your letter, which contains so many sensible and just observations on that subject. He will make a proper use of them, and perhaps they may have more weight, as appearing to come from a Frenchman, than they would have if it were known that they were the observations of an American. I perfectly agree with you in all the sentiments you have expressed on this occasion.

I am sorry for the public's sake, that you are about to quit your office, but on personal considerations I shall congratulate you ; for I cannot conceive of a more happy man than he who having been long loaded with public cares, finds himself relieved from them, and enjoying private repose in the bosom of his friends and family.

With sincere regard and attachment, I am ever, dear sir, yours, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, December 26th, 1783.

Sir,

If the Congress should think it fit to have a consul for the United States in London, and do not appoint one of our own countrymen to that office, I beg leave to mention the merits of Mr. William Hodgson, a merchant of that city, who has always been a zealous friend to America, was a principal promoter of the subscription for the relief of American prisoners, and chairman of the committee for dispensing the money raised by that subscription. He also took the trouble of applying the moneys I furnished him with when the subscription was exhausted, and constantly assisted me in all the negotiations I had with the British Ministers, in their favor, wherein he generally succeeded, being a man of weight and credit, very active, and much esteemed for his probity and integrity. These his services, continued steadily during the whole war, seem to entitle him to the favorable notice of Congress, when any occasion offers of doing him service or pleasure.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

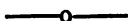
DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, March 2d, 1784.

My dear Friend,

Will you be so good as to transmit the enclosed to Mr. Jay? I am sorry that we are going to lose him from this side of the Atlantic. If your American ratification should arrive speedily, I might hope to have the pleasure of seeing him again before his departure. As soon as I hear from you of the arrival of your ratification I will immediately apply for the despatch of the British ratification. I wish very much to have the pleasure of conversing with you again. In hopes that that time may come soon, I have nothing further to say at present. Believe me always to be, what you have always known me to have been, a friend of general philanthropy, and particularly your ever most affectionate,

D. HARTLEY.



TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Passy, March 9th, 1784.

Sir,

I received a few days since a letter from Annapolis, dated June the 5th, in your hand writing, but not signed, acquainting the Commissioners with the causes of delay in sending the ratification of the definitive treaty. The term was expired before that letter came to hand, but I hope no difficulty will arise from a failure in a point not essential, and which was occasioned by accidents. I have just received from Mr. Hartley a letter on the subject, of which I enclose a copy.

We have had a terrible winter, too, here, such as the oldest men do not remember, and indeed it has been very severe all over Europe.

I have exchanged ratifications with the Ambassador of Sweden, and enclose a copy of that I received from him.

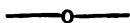
Mr. Jay is lately returned from England. Mr. Laurens is still there, but proposes departing for America next month, as does also Mr. Jay with his family. Mr. Adams is in Holland, where he has been detained by business and bad weather. These absences have occasioned some delays in our business, but not of much importance.

The war long expected between the Turks and Russians is

prevented by a treaty, and it is thought an accommodation will likewise take place between them and the Emperor. Every thing here continues friendly and favorable to the United States. I am pestered continually with numbers of letters from people in different parts of Europe, who would go to settle in America, but who manifest very extravagant expectations, such as I can by no means encourage, and who appear otherwise to be very improper persons. To save myself trouble, I have just printed some copies of the enclosed little piece, which I purpose to send hereafter in answer to such letters.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, dear sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, May 12th, 1784.

Sir,

In my last I acquainted your Excellency that Mr. Hartley was soon expected here to exchange ratifications of the definitive treaty. He is now arrived, and proposes to make the exchange this afternoon. I shall then be enabled to send a copy. Enclosed is the new British proclamation respecting our trade with their Colonies. It is said to be a temporary provision, till Parliament can assemble and make some proper regulating law, or till a commercial treaty shall be framed and agreed to. Mr. Hartley expects instructions for planning with us such a treaty. The Ministry are supposed to have been too busy with the new elections, when he left London, to think of those matters.

This Court has not completed its intended new system for the trade of their Colonies, so that I cannot yet give a certain account of the advantages that will in fine be allowed us. At present it is said we are to have two free ports, Tobago and the Mole, and that we may carry lumber and all sorts of provisions to the rest, except flour, which is reserved in favor of Bordeaux, and that we shall be permitted to export coffee, rum, molasses, and some sugar for our own consumption.

We have had under consideration a commercial treaty proposed to us by the King of Prussia, and have sent it back with our remarks to

Mr. Adams, who will I suppose transmit it immediately to Congress. Those planned with Denmark and Portugal wait its determination.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere and great esteem, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

*May 13th.* I now enclose a copy of the ratification of the definitive treaty on the part of his Britannic Majesty.

—o—

DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, June 1st, 1784.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that I have transmitted to London the ratification on the part of Congress of the definitive treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States of America, and I am ordered to represent to you, that a want of form appears in the first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom in every treaty in which a crowned head and republic are parties. It is likewise to be observed, that the term definitive *articles* is used instead of definitive *treaty*, and the conclusion appears likewise deficient, as it is neither signed by the President nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument.

I am ordered to propose to you, sir, that these defects in the ratification should be corrected, which might very easily be done, either by signing a declaration in the name of Congress for preventing the particular mode of expression, so far as it relates to precedency in the first paragraph, being considered as a precedent to be adopted on any future occasion, or else by having a new copy made out in America, in which these mistakes should be corrected, and which might be done without any prejudice arising to either of the parties from the delay.

I am, sir, with great respect and consideration, &c.,

DAVID HARTLEY.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, June 2d, 1784.

Sir,

I have considered the observations you did me the honor of communicating to me, concerning certain inaccuracies of expression, and supposed defects of formality in the instrument of ratification, some of which are said to be of such a nature as to affect the validity of the instrument.

The first is, "that the United States are named before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are the contracting parties." With respect to this it seems to me we should distinguish between that act in which both join, to wit, the treaty, and that which is the act of each separately, the ratification. It is necessary that all the modes of expression in the joint act should be agreed to by both parties, though in their separate acts each party is master of, and alone accountable for, its own mode. And, on inspecting the treaty it will be found that his Majesty is always regularly named before the United States. Thus, "the established custom *in treaties* between crowned heads and republics," contended for on your part, is strictly observed; and the ratification following the treaty contains these words: "Now know ye, that we, the United States in Congress assembled, having seen and considered the definitive articles aforesaid, have *approved, ratified, and confirmed*, and by these presents do *approve, ratify, and confirm*, the said articles, AND EVERY PART AND CLAUSE THEREOF," &c. Hereby all those articles, parts, and clauses, wherein the King is named before the United States, are *approved, ratified, and confirmed*, and this solemnly under the signature of the President of Congress, with the public seal affixed by their order, and countersigned by their Secretary.

No declaration on the subject more determinate or more authentic can possibly be made or given, which, when considered, may probably induce his Majesty's Ministers to waive the proposition of our signing a similar declaration, or of sending back the ratification to be corrected in this point, neither appearing to be really necessary. I will, however, if it be still desired, transmit to Congress the observation, and the difficulty occasioned by it, and request their orders upon it. In the mean time I may venture to say, that I am

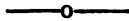
confident there was no intention of affronting his Majesty by their order of nomination, but that it resulted merely from that sort of complaisance which every nation seems to have for itself, and of that respect for its own government, customarily so expressed in its own acts, of which the English among the rest afford an instance, when in the title of the King they always name Great Britain before France.

The second objection is, "that the term *definitive articles* is used instead of *definitive treaty*." If the words *definitive treaty* had been used in the ratification instead of *definitive articles*, it might have been more correct, though the difference seems not great, nor of much importance, as in the treaty itself it is called the present *definitive treaty*.

The other objections are, "that the conclusion likewise appears deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument." The situation of seals and signatures in public instruments differs in different countries, though all equally valid; for when all the parts of an instrument are connected by a riband, whose ends are secured under the impression of the seal, the signature and seal wherever placed are understood as relating to and authenticating the whole. Our usage is, to place them both together in the broad margin near the beginning of the piece, and so they stand in the present ratification, the concluding words of which declare the intention of such signing and sealing to be giving authenticity to the whole instrument, viz: "*In testimony* whereof, we have *caused* the seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed; witness his Excellency Thomas Mifflin, Esquire, President;" and the date, supposed to be omitted, perhaps from its not appearing in figures, is nevertheless to be found written in words at length, viz: "this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred eighty-four," which made the figures unnecessary.

With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Sir,

Passy, June 16th, 1784.

My letter by Mr. Jay acquainted your Excellency that the



ratifications of the definitive treaty were exchanged. A copy of the British part was also sent by him.

Mr. Hartley remained here expecting instructions to treat with us on the subject of commerce. The bustle attending a new election and meeting of Parliament, he imagined might occasion the long delay of those instructions. He now thinks that the affair of the American trade being under the consideration of Parliament, it is probable no treaty will be proposed till the result is known. Mr. Jay, who sailed for America the 1st instant from Dover, and who saw there several of our friends from London before his departure, and Mr. Laurens, who left London the 6th to go on in the Falmouth packet, will be able to give you more perfect informations than I can, of what may be expected as the determination of the British Government respecting our intercourse with their islands; and, therefore, I omit my conjectures, only mentioning, that from various circumstances there seems to be some lurking remains of ill-humor there, and of resentment against us, which only wants a favorable opportunity to manifest itself.

This makes it more necessary for us to be upon our guard, and prepared for events that a change in the affairs of Europe may produce; its tranquillity depending, perhaps, on the life of one man, and it being impossible to foresee in what situation a new arrangement of its various interests may place us. Ours will be respected in proportion to the apparent solidity of our Government, the support of our credit, the maintenance of a good understanding with our friends, and our readiness for defence. All which I persuade myself will be taken care of.

Enclosed I send a copy of a letter from Mr. Hartley to me respecting some supposed defects in the ratification, together with my answer, which he has transmitted to London. The objections appeared to me trivial and absurd; but I thought it prudent to treat them with as much decency as I could, lest the ill-temper should be augmented, which might be particularly inconvenient while the commerce was under consideration. There has not yet been time for Mr. Hartley to hear whether my answer has been satisfactory, or whether the Ministers will still insist on my sending for an amended copy from America, as they proposed.

I do not perceive the least diminution in the good disposition of this Court towards us, and I hope care will be taken to preserve it.

The Marquis de la Fayette, who will have the honor of delivering this to you, has, ever since his arrival in Europe, been very industrious in his endeavors to serve us and promote our interests, and has been of great use on several occasions. I should wish the Congress might think fit to express in some proper manner their sense of his merit.

My malady prevents my going to Versailles, as I cannot bear a carriage upon pavement; but my grandson goes regularly on Court days to supply my place, and is well received there. The last letters I have had the honor of receiving from you are of the 14th of January.

With great respect, I am, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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*Consular Convention.*

Convention between his Most Christian Majesty and the Thirteen United States of North America, for the purpose of determining and fixing the functions and prerogatives of their respective Consuls, Vice Consuls, Agents, and Commissaries.

His Majesty the Most Christian King, and the Thirteen United States of North America, having by the 29th article of the treaty of amity and commerce concluded between them, mutually granted the liberty of having in their respective States and ports, consuls, vice consuls, agents, and commissaries, and being willing, in consequence thereof, to determine and fix in a reciprocal and permanent manner the functions and prerogatives of the said consuls, vice consuls, agents, and commissaries, his Most Christian Majesty has nominated the Sieur Charles Gravier, Count of Vergennes, Baron of Welfording, &c., Counsellor of the King in all his Councils, Commander of his Orders, Head of the Royal Council of Finances, Counsellor of the State of the Sword, Minister and Secretary of State, and of his Commands and Finances; and the United States, Mr. Benjamin Franklin, their Minister Plenipotentiary to his Most Christian Majesty, who, after having communicated to each other their respective full powers, agreed upon what follows:

ARTICLE I.

The consuls and vice consuls nominated by his Most Christian

Majesty and the United States shall be bound to present their commissions on their arrival in their respective States, according to the form which shall be there established. There shall be delivered to them without any charges the *exequatur* necessary for the exercise of their functions; and on the exhibition they shall make of the said *exequatur*, the governors, commanders, heads of justice, public bodies, tribunals, and other officers, having authority in the ports and places of their consulates, shall cause them to enjoy, as soon as possible, and without difficulty, the preëminences, authority, and privileges, reciprocally granted, without exacting from said consuls and vice consuls any duty under any pretext whatever.

## ARTICLE II.

The respective consuls shall have power to establish vice consuls in the different ports and places of their departments, where necessity shall require. There shall be delivered to them likewise the *exequatur* necessary to the exercise of their functions, in the form pointed out in the preceding article, and on the exhibition, which they shall make of the said *exequatur*, they shall be admitted and acknowledged in the terms, and according to the powers, authority, and privileges stipulated by the 1st, 4th, and 5th articles of the present convention.

## ARTICLE III.

The respective consuls and vice consuls may establish agents in the different ports and places of their departments where necessity shall require; these agents may be chosen among the merchants, either national or foreign, and furnished with a commission from one of the said consuls. It shall be their business, respectively, to render to their respective merchants, navigators, and vessels, all possible service, and to inform the nearest consul or vice consul of the wants of the said merchants, navigators, and vessels, without the said agents otherwise participating in the immunities, rights, and privileges attributed to the consuls and vice consuls, and without power to exact from the said merchants any duty or emolument whatever, under any pretext whatever.

## ARTICLE IV.

The consuls and vice consuls, officers of the consulate, and in

general all persons attached to the consular functions, shall enjoy respectively a full and entire immunity for their persons, their papers, and their houses. The list of the said persons shall be approved and inspected by the executive power of the place of their residence.

They shall be exempt from all personal service and public offices, from soldier's billets, militia, watch-guard, guardianship, and trusteeship, as well as from all duties, taxes, impositions, and charges whatsoever, except the real estates of which they may be proprietors, which shall be subject to the taxes imposed on the estates of all other individuals.

They shall place over the outward door of their house the arms of their sovereign, without this mark of distinction giving to the said house the right of asylum for any malefactor or criminal, so that in case it should happen that any malefactor or criminal take refuge there, he shall be instantly delivered up on the first requisition, and without difficulty.

## ARTICLE V.

Generally, in all cases whatever, which concern the police or administration of justice, where it may be necessary to have a juridical declaration from the said consuls and vice consuls respectively, the governors, commandants, chief justice, public bodies, tribunals, or other officers whatever, of their respective residence there, having authority, shall be bound to inform them of it, by writing to them, or sending to them a military or civil officer to let them know, either the object which is proposed, or the necessity there is for going to them to demand from them this declaration, and the said consuls and vice consuls shall be bound on their part to comply faithfully with what shall be desired of them on these occasions.

## ARTICLE VI.

The consuls and vice consuls respectively may establish a chancery, where shall be deposited the consular acts and deliberations, all effects left by deceased persons, or saved from shipwreck, as well as testaments, obligations, contracts, and, in general, all the acts and proceedings done between, or by, persons of their nations.

They may, in consequence, appoint for the *business* of the said chancery capable persons, receive them, administer an oath to them,

give to them the keeping of the seal, and the right of the seal, commissions, judgments, and other acts of the consulate, as well as there to discharge the functions of notaries and registers.

ARTICLE VII.

The consuls and vice consuls respectively shall have the exclusive right of receiving in their chancery, or on board of vessels, the declarations and all other acts which the captains, masters, seamen, passengers, and merchants of their nation would make there, even their testaments and other dispositions of last will, and the copies of the said acts duly authenticated by the said consuls, or vice consuls, and under the seal of their consulate, shall receive faith in law in all the tribunals of France and the United States.

They shall have also, and exclusively, the right to inventory, liquidate, and proceed to the sale of the movable effects of the estates left by subjects of their nation who shall die within the extent of the consulate. They shall proceed therein with the assistance of two merchants of their said nation of their own choosing, and shall deposit in their chancery the effects and papers of the said estates, and no officer, military or civil, or of the police of the country, shall trouble them or interfere therein, in any manner whatsoever; but the said consuls and vice consuls shall not deliver up the same and their product to the lawful heirs, or *their attorneys*, until they shall have discharged all the debts which the deceased shall have contracted in the country, by judgment, by acts, or by notes, the writing and signing of which shall be known and certified by two principal merchants of the nation of the said deceased; and in all other cases the payment of debts cannot be ordered but on the creditor's giving sufficient and local security to repay the sums unduly received, principal, interest, and costs, which securities, however, shall remain duly discharged after a year in time of peace, and two years in time of war, if the demand in discharge cannot be formed before these delays, against the heirs who shall present themselves.

ARTICLE VIII.

The respective consuls and vice consuls shall receive the declarations, "*consulats*," and other consular acts, from all captains and masters of their respective nations on account of average losses

sustained at sea by leakage, or throwing merchandizes overboard, and these captains and masters shall leave in the chancery of the said consuls and vice consuls, the "consulats," and other consular acts, which they may have had made in other ports on account of the accidents that may have happened to them on their voyage. If a subject of his Most Christian Majesty and a citizen of the United States are interested in the said cargo, the average shall be fixed by the tribunals of the country, and not by the consuls or vice consuls; and the tribunals shall admit the acts and declarations, if any should have been passed before the said consuls and vice consuls; but when only the subjects of their own nation, or foreigners, shall be interested, the respective consuls or vice consuls, and in case of their absence or distance, their agents furnished with their commission, shall officially nominate skillful persons of their said nation to regulate the damages and averages.

## ARTICLE IX.

In case by storms or other accidents, French ships or vessels shall run ashore on the coasts of the United States, or the ships and vessels of the United States shall run ashore on the coasts of France, the consul or vice consul nearest to the place of shipwreck shall do whatever he may judge proper, as well for the purpose of saving the said ship or vessel, its cargo and appurtenances, as for the storing and security of the effects and merchandize saved. He may take an inventory without any officers military, of the custom-house, justices, or the police of the country interfering, otherwise than to facilitate to the consuls, vice consuls, captain and crew of the vessel shipwrecked or run ashore, all the assistance and favor which they shall ask, either for the celerity and security of the salvage and effects saved, or to prevent all disturbances.

To prevent even any kind of dispute and discussion in the said cases of shipwreck, it has been agreed that where no consul or vice consul shall be found to attend to the salvage, or that the residence of the said consul or vice consul (he not being at the place of shipwreck) shall be further distant from the said place than that of the competent territorial judge, the latter shall immediately there proceed therein with all the celerity, safety, and precautions prescribed by the respective laws; but the said territorial judge shall

retire on the coming of the consul or vice consul, and shall resign to him the procedures by him done, the expenses of which the consul or vice consul shall cause to be reimbursed to him.

The merchandize and effects saved shall be deposited in the custom-house, or other nearest place of safety, with the inventory of them, which shall be made by the consul or vice consul, or in their absence by the judge who shall have had cognizance thereof, and the said merchandizes and effects shall be afterwards delivered, after levying therefrom the costs, and without form of process to the proprietors, who being furnished with a *replevy* from the nearest consul or vice consul, shall reclaim them by themselves, or their attorneys, either for the purpose of reëxporting the merchandizes, and in that case they shall pay no kind of duties of exportation, or for the purpose of selling them in the country if they are not prohibited; and in this latter case, the said merchandizes being averaged, there shall be granted them an abatement of the entrance duties proportioned to the damages sustained, which shall be ascertained by the *verbal process* formed at the time of the shipwreck, or of the vessels running ashore.

#### ARTICLE X.

The consuls and vice consuls shall have, on board of the vessels of their respective nations, full power and jurisdiction in matters civil. They shall cause to be executed the respective laws, ordinances, and rules concerning navigation on board the said vessels, and for this purpose they shall go there without being interrupted by any officer or other person whatsoever.

They may cause to be arrested every vessel carrying the flag of their respective nation. They may sequester them, and even send them back respectively, from the United States to France, or from France to the United States. They may cause to be arrested without difficulty, every captain, master, sailor, or passenger of their said respective nation.

They may cause to be arrested or detained in the country the sailors and deserters of their respective nations, or send them back, or transport them out of the country.

It shall be sufficient proof that the sailors and deserters belong to one of the respective nations, that their names be written in the ships' registers, or inserted in the roll of the crew.

One and the other of these proofs concerning sailors and deserters being thus given, no tribunals, judges, and officers whatsoever shall in any manner whatever take cognizance of the complaints, which the said sailors and deserters may make, but they shall, on the contrary, be delivered up on an order signed by the consul or vice consul, without its being in any one's power in any manner to detain, engage, or withdraw them. And to attain to the complete execution of the arrangements contained in this article, all persons having authority shall be bound to assist the said consuls or vice consuls, and, on a simple requisition signed by them, they shall cause to be detained and guarded in prison at the disposal and expense of the said consuls and vice consuls the said sailors and deserters, until they shall have an opportunity to send them out of the country.

## ARTICLE XI.

In cases where the respective subjects shall have committed any crime, they shall be amenable to the judges of the country.

## ARTICLE XII.

All differences and suits between the subjects of his Most Christian Majesty settled in the United States, or between the citizens and subjects of the United States settled in France, and all differences and suits concerning commerce between the subjects of his Most Christian Majesty, and one of the parties residing in France or elsewhere, and the other in the United States, or between the citizens and subjects of the United States, one of the parties residing in the United States, or elsewhere, and the other in France, shall be determined by the respective consuls, either by a reference to arbitration, or by a summary judgment, and without costs.

No officer, civil or military, shall interfere or take any part whatever in the affair. Appeals shall be carried before the tribunals of France, or the United States, to whom it may appertain to take cognizance thereof. The consuls or vice consuls shall not take cognizance of disputes or differences, which shall arise betwixt a subject of his Most Christian Majesty and a citizen of the United States. But the said disputes shall be brought before the tribunals to which the defendant shall be amenable.



## ARTICLE XIII.

The general utility of commerce having caused to be established in France tribunals and particular forms to accelerate the decision of commercial affairs, the merchants of the United States shall enjoy the benefit of these establishments in France, and the Congress of the United States shall recommend to the Legislatures of the different States to provide equivalent advantages, in favor of the French merchants, for the prompt despatch and decision of affairs of the same nature.

## ARTICLE XIV.

The subjects of his Most Christian Majesty and those of the United States, who shall prove that they belong to the body of the respective nations, by the certificate of the consul or vice consul of the district, mentioning their names, surnames, and place of their settlement, as inscribed in the register of the consulate, shall not lose, for any cause whatever in the respective domains and States, the quality of subjects of the country of which they originally were, conformably to the eleventh article of the treaty of amity and commerce, of the 6th of February, 1778, of which the present article shall serve as an interpretation in case of necessity, and the said subjects respectively shall enjoy in consequence exemption from all personal service in the place of their settlement.

## ARTICLE XV.

If any other nation acquires, by virtue of any convention whatever either in France or in the United States, a treatment more favorable with respect to the consular preëminences, powers, authority, and privileges, the consuls, vice consuls and agents of his Most Christian Majesty, or the United States, reciprocally shall participate therein, agreeably to the terms stipulated by the second, third, and fourth articles of the treaty of amity and commerce, concluded between his Most Christian Majesty and the United States.

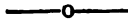
## ARTICLE XVI.

The ratification of the present convention shall be given in proper form and exchanged on both sides, within the space of six months, or sooner if possible.

In faith whereof, we, the underwritten, Ministers Plenipotentiaries of his Most Christian Majesty and the United States of North America, have signed the present convention, and have thereto affixed the seal of our arms.

Done at Versailles, the 29th of July, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

GRAVIER DE VERGENNES.  
B. FRANKLIN.



TO COUNT DE MERCY ARGENTEAU.

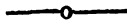
Passy, July 30th, 1784.

Sir,

I have the honor to communicate to your Excellency an extract from the instructions of Congress to their late Commissioners for treating of peace, expressing their desire to cultivate the friendship of his Imperial Majesty, and to enter into a treaty of commerce for the mutual advantages of his subjects and the citizens of the United States, which I request you will be pleased to lay before his Majesty. The appointing and instructing Commissioners for treaties of commerce with the Powers of Europe generally has, by various circumstances, been long delayed, but is now done, and I have just received advice, that Mr. Jefferson, late Governor of Virginia, commissioned with Mr. Adams, our Minister in Holland, and myself, for that service, is on his way hither, and may be expected by the end of August, when we shall be ready to enter into a treaty with his Imperial Majesty for the above purpose, if such should be his pleasure.

With great and sincere respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE MERCY ARGENTEAU TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, July 30th, 1784.

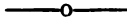
Sir,

I have received the letter you did me the honor to write to me this morning, and I shall lose no time to transmit the contents to my Court.

The sentiments of the Emperor towards the United States of America make me foresee the satisfaction which his Majesty will have to enter into reciprocal, suitable, and advantageous connexions with them. I have not the least doubt but that measures will be instantly taken on this subject to concert with you, sir, and with the appointed Ministers Plenipotentiary, and as soon as the answer from my Court shall come, I shall instantly communicate it to you.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE MERCY ARGENTEAU.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

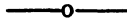
Versailles, August 27th, 1784.

Sir,

You have communicated to me an extract from the instructions, which Congress addressed to you on the 11th of May last, which imports that the United States will in no case treat any other nation with respect to commerce more advantageously than the French. This disposition is much the wisest, as it will prevent those misunderstandings which might arise from the equivocal terms in which the 2d article of the treaty of amity and commerce, signed February 6th, 1778, is conceived. But that the resolution of Congress on this subject may be clearly stated, it would be best, sir, that you furnish me with it in the form of a declaration, or at least in an official note, signed by yourself. I have no doubt that you will adopt one of these two forms.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, September 3d, 1784.

Sir,

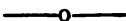
I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency, by order of Congress, a resolution of theirs dated the 11th of May last, which is in the words following, viz :

“ *Resolved*, That Doctor Franklin be instructed to express to the

Court of France the constant desire of Congress to meet their wishes; that these States are about to form a general system of commerce by treaties with other nations; that, at this time, they cannot foresee what claim might be given to those nations by the explanatory propositions from the Count de Vergennes, on the 2d and 3d articles of our treaty of amity and commerce with his Most Christian Majesty, but that he may be assured it will be our constant care to place no people on more advantageous ground than the subjects of his Majesty.”

With great respect, I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

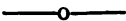
Versailles, September 9th, 1784.

Sir,

I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write me the 3d instant. You there declare in the name of Congress that the United States will be careful not to treat any other nation, in matters of commerce, more advantageously than the French nation. This declaration, founded on the treaty of the 6th of February, 1778, has been very agreeable to the King; and you, sir, can assure Congress, that the United States shall constantly experience a perfect reciprocity in France.

I have the honor to be, very sincerely, sir, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



COUNT DE MERCY ARGENTEAU TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, September 28th, 1784.

Sir,

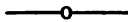
With respect to the proposition of the United States of America, that I forwarded to my Court, concerning the arrangements of commerce to be adopted by the respective dominions, I have received the order, sir, which I have the honor to communicate to you, that his Majesty, the Emperor, has agreed to the said proposition, and

that he has directed the Government General of the Low Countries to adopt measures to put it in execution.

When the particulars respecting this matter shall be sent to me, I shall instantly communicate them.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew the assurances of the most perfect attachment, with which I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE MERCY ARGENTEAU.



TO CHARLES THOMSON.

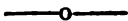
Passy, October 16th, 1784.

Dear Sir,

It was intended by the Commissioners to write a joint letter to Congress, but I am afraid the opportunity may be missed. This may serve to inform you that propositions of treating have been made by us to all the Powers of Europe according to our instructions, and we are waiting for their answers. There are apprehensions here of a war between the Emperor and Holland, but, as the season is not proper for opening a campaign, I hope the winter will give time for mediators to accommodate matters. We have not yet heard that Mr. Jay has accepted the Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Passy, November 11th, 1784.

Dear Friend,

I received your kind letter of August 13th, with the papers annexed, relative to the affair of Longchamps. I hope satisfaction will be given to M. Marbois. The Commissioners have written a joint letter to Congress. This serves to cover a few papers relative to matters with which I was particularly charged in the instructions. I shall write to you fully by the next opportunity, having now only time to add, that I am, as ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I executed the instructions of October 29th, 1783, as soon as I knew the commissions for treating with the Emperor, &c., were

issued, which was not till July, 1784. The three letters between the Emperor's Minister and me are what passed on that occasion.

B. F.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, February 8th, 1785.

Sir,

I received by the Marquis de la Fayette the two letters you did me the honor of writing to me the 11th and 14th of December, the one enclosing a letter from Congress to the King, the other a resolve of Congress respecting the convention for establishing consuls. The letter was immediately delivered, and well received. The resolve came too late to suspend signing the convention, it having been done July last, and a copy sent so long since that we now expected the ratification. As that copy seems to have miscarried I now send another.

I am not informed what objection has arisen in Congress to the plan sent me. Mr. Jefferson thinks it may have been to the part which restrained the consuls from all concern in commerce. That article was omitted, being thought unnecessary to be stipulated, since either party would always have the power of imposing such restraints on its own officers whenever it should think fit. I am, however, of opinion that this or any other reasonable article or alteration may be obtained at the desire of Congress, and established by a supplement.

Permit me, sir, to congratulate you on your being called to the high honor of presiding in our national councils, and to wish you every felicity, being, with the most perfect esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, April 12th, 1785.

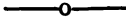
Sir,

M. de Chaumont, who will have the honor of presenting this line to your Excellency, is a young gentleman of excellent character, whose father was one of our most early friends in this country, which he manifested by crediting us with a thousand barrels of gunpowder and other military stores in 1776, before we had provided any apparent means of payment. He has, as I understand, some demands

to make on Congress, the nature of which I am unacquainted with ; but my regard for the family makes me wish that they may obtain a speedy consideration, and such favorable issue as they may appear to merit.

To this end I beg leave to recommend him to your countenance and protection, and am, with great respect, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, May 3d, 1785.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency, that I have at length obtained, and yesterday received, the permission of Congress to return to America. As my malady makes it impracticable for me to pay my devoirs at Versailles personally, may I beg the favor of you, sir, to express respectfully for me to his Majesty, the deep sense I have of all the inestimable benefits his goodness has conferred on my country ; a sentiment that it will be the business of the little remainder of life now left me, to impress equally on the minds of all my countrymen. My sincere prayers are, that God may shower down his blessings on the King, the Queen, their children, and all the royal family, to the latest generations !

Permit me, at the same time, to offer you my thankful acknowledgments for the protection and countenance you afforded me at my arrival, and your many favors during my residence here, of which I shall always retain the most grateful remembrance.

My grandson would have had the honor of waiting on you with this letter, but he has been some time ill of a fever.

With the greatest esteem and respect, and best wishes for the constant prosperity of yourself, and all your amiable family, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.



M. DE RAYNEVAL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, May 8th, 1785.

Sir,

I have learned with the greatest concern that you are soon to

leave us. You will carry with you the affections of all France, for nobody has been more esteemed than you. I shall call on you at Passy, to desire you to retain for me a share in your remembrance, and renew to you personally the assurances of the most perfect attachment, with which I have the honor to be, sir, &c.,

DE RAYNEVAL.

—o—

TO JOHN JAY, SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Passy, May 10th, 1785.

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter of the 8th of March enclosing the resolution of Congress, permitting my return to America, for which I am very thankful, and am now preparing to depart the first good opportunity. Next to the pleasure of rejoining my own family will be that of seeing you and yours well and happy, and embracing once more my little friend, whose singular attachment to me I shall always remember.

I shall be glad to render any acceptable service to Mr. Randall. I conveyed the bayberry wax to Abbé de Chalut, with your compliments, as you desired. He returns his with many thanks. Be pleased to make my respectful compliments acceptable to Mrs. Jay; and believe me ever, with sincere and great respect and esteem, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. The striking of the medals being now in agitation here, I send the enclosed for consideration.

B. F.

—o—

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Passy, May 10th, 1785.

Dear Sir,

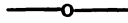
An old gentleman in Switzerland, long of the Magistracy there, having written a book entitled *Du Gouvernement des Mœurs*, which is thought to contain many matters, that may be useful in America, desired to know of me how he could convey a number of the printed copies, to be distributed gratis among the members of Congress. I advised his addressing the package to you by way of Amsterdam,



whence a friend of mine would forward it. It is accordingly shipped there on board the Van Berckel, Captain W. Campbell. There are good things in the work; but his chapter on the liberty of the press appears to me to contain more rhetoric than reason.

With great esteem I am, ever, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, May 22d, 1785.

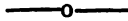
Sir,

I have learnt with much concern of your retiring, and of your approaching departure for America. You cannot doubt but that the regrets which you will leave will be proportionate to the consideration you so justly enjoy.

I can assure you, sir, that the esteem the King entertains for you does not leave you any thing to wish; and that his Majesty will learn with real satisfaction, that your fellow citizens have rewarded in a manner worthy of you, the important services that you have rendered them.

I beg, sir, that you will preserve for me a share in your remembrance, and never doubt the sincerity of the interest I take in your happiness. It is founded on the sentiments of attachment of which I have assured you, and with which I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



TO THOMAS BARCLAY.

Passy, June 19th, 1785.

Sir,

With respect to my continuing to charge £2,500 sterling per annum as my salary, of which you desire some explanation, I send you, in support of that charge, the resolution of Congress, which is in these words:

“In Congress, October 5th, 1779. Resolved, that each of the Ministers Plenipotentiary be allowed at the rate of two thousand five hundred pounds sterling per annum, and each of their Secretaries at

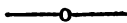
the rate of one thousand pounds sterling per annum, in full for their services and expenses respectively. That the salary of each of the said officers be computed from the time of his leaving his place of abode, to enter on the duties of his office, and be continued three months after the notice of his recall.”

The several bills I afterwards received, drawn on the Congress banker, Mr. Grand, for my salary, were all calculated on that sum, as my salary; and neither the banker nor myself has received notice of any change respecting me. He has accordingly, since the drawing ceased, continued to pay me at the same rate. I have, indeed, heard that a resolution was passed last year, that the salaries of Plenipotentiaries should be no more than £2,000 sterling per annum. But the resolution, I suppose, can relate only to such Plenipotentiaries as should be afterwards appointed; for I cannot conceive that a Congress, after promising a Minister £2,500 a year, and when he has thereby been encouraged to engage in a way of living for their honor which only that salary can support, would think it just to diminish it a fifth, and leave him under the difficulty of reducing his expenses proportionably—a thing scarce practicable—the necessity of which he might have avoided, if he had not confided in their original promise.

But the article of salary, with all the rest of my accounts, will be submitted to the judgment of Congress, together with some other considerable articles I have not charged, but on which I shall expect from their equity some consideration. If, for want of knowing precisely the intention of Congress, what expenses should be deemed public, and what private, I have charged any article to the public which should be defrayed by me, their banker has my order, as soon as the pleasure of Congress shall be made known to him, to rectify the error, by transferring the amount to my private account, and discharging by so much that of the public.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.



M. DE CASTRIES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, July 10th, 1785.

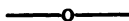
Sir,

I was not apprized until within a few hours of the arrangements

which you have made for your departure. Had I been informed of it sooner I should have proposed to the King to order a frigate to convey you to your own country in a manner suitable to the known importance of the services you have been engaged in, to the esteem you have acquired in France, and the particular esteem which his Majesty entertains for you.

I pray you, sir, to accept my regrets, and a renewed assurance of the most entire consideration, with which I have the honor to be, sir, your very humble and very obedient servant,

DE CASTRIES.



TO JOHN JAY, SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Philadelphia, September 19th, 1785.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you, that I left Paris the 12th of July, and, agreeable to the permission of Congress, am returned to my own country. Mr. Jefferson had recovered his health, and was much esteemed and respected there. Our joint letters have already informed you of our late proceedings, to which I have nothing to add, except that the last act I did, as Minister Plenipotentiary for making treaties, was to sign with him, two days before I came away, the treaty of friendship and commerce that had been agreed on with Prussia,\* and which was to be carried to the Hague by Mr. Short, there to be signed by the Baron Thulemeyer on the part of the King, who, without the least hesitation, had approved and conceded to the new humane articles proposed by Congress. Mr. Short was also to call at London for the signature of Mr. Adams, who I learnt, when at Southampton, was well received at the British Court.

The Captain Lamb, who, in a letter of yours to Mr. Adams, was said to be coming to us with instructions respecting Morocco, had not appeared, nor had we heard any thing of him; so nothing had been done by us in that treaty.

I left the Court of France in the same friendly disposition towards the United States that we have all along experienced, though concerned to find that our credit is not better supported in the

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\* See this treaty at large in the public *Journal of Congress*, vol. 4, p. 639.

payment of the interest money due on our loans, which, in case of another war, must be, they think, extremely prejudicial to us, and indeed may contribute to draw on a war the sooner, by affording our enemies the encouraging confidence that those who take so little care to pay will not again find it easy to borrow. I received from the King at my departure, the present of his picture set round with diamonds, usually given to Ministers Plenipotentiary who have signed any treaties with that Court; and it is at the disposition of Congress, to whom be pleased to present my dutiful respects.

I am, with great esteem and regard, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Not caring to trust them to a common conveyance, I send by my late secretary, who will have the honor of delivering them to you, all the original treaties I have been concerned in negotiating that were completed. Those with Portugal and Denmark continue in suspense.

B. F.

—o—

TO MR. GRAND, BANKER AT PARIS.

Philadelphia, July 11th, 1786.

Sir,

I send you enclosed some letters that have passed between the Secretary of Congress and me, respecting three millions of livres, acknowledged to have been received before the treaty of February, 1778, as *don gratuit* from the King, of which only two millions are found in your accounts; unless the million from the Farmers General be one of the three. I have been assured, that all the money received from the King, whether as loan or gift, went through your hands; and as I always looked on the million we had of the Farmers General to be distinct from what we had of the Crown, I wonder how I came to sign the contract acknowledging three millions of gift, when, in reality, there was only two exclusive of that from the Farmers; and, as both you and I examined the project of the contract before I signed it, I am surprised that neither of us took notice of the error.

It is possible that the million furnished ostensibly by the Farmers was in fact a gift of the Crown, in which case, as Mr. Thomson observes, they owe us for the two ship loads of tobacco which they

received on account of it. I must earnestly request of you to get this matter explained, that it may stand clear before I die, lest some enemy should afterwards accuse me of having received a million not accounted for.

I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—

M. DURIVAL TO MR. GRAND.

Translation.

Versailles, August 30th, 1786.

Sir,

I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write on the 28th of this month, touching the advance of a million which you say was made by the Farmers General to the United States of America, the 3d of June, 1777. I have no knowledge of that advance. What I have verified is, that the King, by the contract of the 25th of February, 1783, has confirmed the gratuitous gift, which his Majesty had previously made, of the three millions hereafter mentioned, viz: one million delivered by the Royal Treasury, the 10th of June, 1776, and two other millions advanced also by the Royal Treasury, in 1777, on four receipts of the Deputies of Congress, of the 17th of January, 3d of April, 10th of June, and 15th of October, of the same year. This explanation will, sir, I hope, resolve your doubt touching the advance of the 3d of June, 1777. I further recommend to you, sir, to confer on this subject with M. Gojard, who ought to be better informed than we, who had no knowledge of any advances but those made by the Royal Treasury.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DURIVAL

—o—

M. DURIVAL TO MR. GRAND.

Translation.

Versailles, September 5th, 1786.

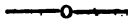
Sir,

I laid before the Count de Vergennes the two letters which you did me the honor to write, touching the three millions, the free gift

of which the King has confirmed in favor of the United States of America. The Minister, sir, observed that this gift has nothing to do with the million which the Congress may have received from the Farmers General in 1777; consequently he thinks that the receipt which you desire may be communicated to you, cannot satisfy the object of your view, and that it would be useless to give you the copy which you desire.

I have the honor to be, with perfect attachment, &c.,

DURIVAL.



MR. GRAND TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, September 9th, 1786.

My dear Sir,

The letter you honored me with covered the copies of three letters which Mr. Thomson wrote you to obtain an explanation of a million which is not to be found in my accounts. I should have been very much embarrassed in satisfying and proving to him that I had not put that million in my pocket, had I not applied to M. Durival, who, as you will see by the answer enclosed, informs me that there was a million paid by the Royal Treasury on the 10th of June, 1776. This is the very million about which Mr. Thomson inquires, as I have kept an account of the other two millions, which were also furnished by the Royal Treasury, viz: the one million in January and April, 1777, the other in July and October of the same year, as well as that furnished by the Farmers General in June, 1777.

Here, then, are the three millions exactly which were given by the King before the treaty of 1778, and that furnished by the Farmers General. Nothing then remains to be known but who received the first million in June, 1776. It could not be myself, as I was not charged with the business of Congress until January, 1777. I therefore requested of M. Durival a copy of the receipt for the one million. You have the answer which he returned to me. I wrote to him again renewing my request; but as the courier is just setting off, I cannot wait to give you his answer, but you will receive it in my next, if I obtain one.

In the meanwhile, I beg you will receive the assurances of the sentiments of respect, with which I have the honor to be, my dear sir, &c.,

GRAND.

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

M. DURIVAL TO MR. GRAND.

Translation.

Versailles, September 10th, 1786.

Sir,

I have laid before the Count de Vergennes, as you seemed to desire, the letter which you did me the honor to write yesterday. The Minister persists in the opinion that the receipt, the copy of which you request, has no relation to the business with which you were intrusted on behalf of Congress, and that this piece would be useless in the new point of view in which you have placed it. Indeed, sir, it is easy for you to prove that the money in question was not delivered by the Royal Treasury into your hands, as you did not begin to be charged with the business of Congress until January, 1777, and the receipt for that money is of the 10th of June, 1776.

I have the honor to be, with perfect attachment, sir, &c.,

DURIVAL.

—o—

MR. GRAND TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, September 12th, 1786.

Sir,

I hazard a letter in hopes it may be able to join that of the 9th at L'Orient, in order to forward to you the answer I have just received from M. Durival. You will there see, that notwithstanding my entreaty, the Minister himself refuses to give me a copy of the receipt which I asked for. I cannot conceive the reason for this reserve, more especially since, if there has been a million paid, he who has received it has kept the account, and it must in time be known. I shall hear with pleasure that you have been more fortunate in this respect in America than I have been in France; and I repeat to you the assurance of the sentiments of regard, with which I have the honor to be, &c.,

GRAND.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Philadelphia, January 27th, 1787.

Dear Friend,

You may remember, that in the correspondence between us in June last, on the subject of a million *free gift* of the King of France, acknowledged in our contract to have been received, but which did not appear to be accounted for in our banker's accounts, unless it should be the same with the million said to be received from the Farmers General, I mentioned that an explanation might doubtless be easily obtained by writing to Mr. Grand or Mr. Jefferson. I know not whether you have accordingly written to either of them; but being desirous that the matter should speedily be cleared up, I wrote myself to Mr. Grand a letter upon it, of which I now enclose a copy, with his answers, and several letters from M. Durival,\* who is *Chef du Bureau des Fonds* (and has under his care the finance) *des Affaires Etrangères*.

You will see by these letters, that the million in question was delivered to somebody on the 10th of June, 1776, but it does not appear to whom. It is clear, however, that it could not be to Mr. Grand, nor to the Commissioners from Congress, for we did not meet in France till the end of December, 1776, or beginning of January, 1777, and that banker was not charged before with our affairs.

By the Minister's reserve in refusing him a copy of the receipt, I conjecture it must be money advanced for our use to M. de Beaumarchais, and that it is a *Mystère du Cabinet*, which perhaps should not be further inquired into, unless necessary to guard against more demands than may be just from that agent; for it may well be supposed, that if the Court furnished him with the means of supplying us, they may not be willing to furnish authentic proofs of such a transaction so early in our dispute with Britain. Pray tell me, has he dropped his demands, or does he still continue to worry you with them?

I should like to have these original letters returned to me, but you may, if you please, keep copies of them. It is true the million in question makes no difference in your accounts with the King of France, it not being mentioned or charged, as so much lent and to be

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\* See these letters, pp. 526, 527, 528.



repaid, but stated as freely given. Yet, if it was put into the hands of any of your agents, or ministers, they ought certainly to account for it. I do not recollect whether Mr. Deane had arrived before the 10th of June, 1776;\* but from his great want of money, when I joined him a few months after, I hardly think it could have been paid to him. Possibly Mr. Jefferson may obtain the information, though Mr. Grand could not; and I wish he may be directed to make the inquiry, as I know he would do it directly; I mean if, by Hortalez and Co's further demands, or for any other reason, such an inquiry should be thought necessary.†

I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

—o—  
TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, November 29th, 1788.

Sir,

When I had the honor of being the Minister of the United States at the Court of France, Mr. Barclay arriving there, brought me the following resolution of Congress:

“*Resolved*, That a commissioner be appointed by Congress, with full power and authority to liquidate and *finally to settle* the accounts of all the servants in the United States who have been intrusted with the expenditure of public money in Europe, and to commence and prosecute such suits, causes, and actions, as may be necessary for that purpose, or for the recovery of any property of the said United States in the hands of any person or persons whatsoever.

“That the said commissioner be authorized to appoint one or more clerks, with such an allowance as he may think reasonable.

“That the said commissioner and clerks, respectively, take an oath before some person duly authorized to administer an oath, faithfully to execute the trust reposed in them respectively.

“Congress proceeded to the election of a commissioner; and ballots being taken, Mr. T. Barclay was elected.”

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\* Deane did not arrive in Paris till the first week in July.

† This matter was not cleared up till 1794, when Gouverneur Morris was American Minister in Paris. By application to the Government he procured a copy of the receipt of the person who received the million of francs on the 10th of June, 1776. It proved to be Beaumarchais, as Dr. Franklin had conjectured. See *Pitkin's History of the United States*, vol. 1. p. 422.

In pursuance of this resolution, and as soon as Mr. Barclay was at leisure from more pressing business, I rendered to him all my accounts, which he examined, and stated methodically. By his statement he found a balance due me on the 4th of May, 1785, of 7,533 livres, 19 sols, 3 den., which I accordingly received of the Congress banker; the difference between my statement and his being only seven sols, which by mistake I had overcharged about three pence halfpenny sterling.

At my request, however, the accounts were left open for the consideration of Congress, and not finally settled, there being some articles on which I desire their judgment, and having some equitable demands, as I thought them, for extra services, which he had not conceived himself empowered to allow, and therefore I did not put them in my account. He transmitted the accounts to Congress, and had advice of their being received. On my arrival at Philadelphia, one of the first things I did was to despatch my grandson, William T. Franklin, to New York, to obtain a final settlement of those accounts; he having long acted as my secretary, and being well acquainted with the transactions, was able to give an explanation of the articles that might seem to require explaining, if any such there were. He returned without effecting the settlement, being told that it could not be made till the arrival of some documents expected from France. What those documents were I have not been informed, nor can I readily conceive, as all the vouchers existing there had been examined by Mr. Barclay; and I, having been immediately after my arrival engaged in the public business of this State, waited in expectation of hearing from Congress, in case any part of my accounts had been objected to.

It is now more than three years that those accounts have been before that honorable body, and to this day no notice of any such objection has been communicated to me. But reports have for some time past been circulated here, and propagated in the newspapers, that I am greatly indebted to the United States for large sums that had been put into my hands, and that I avoid a settlement. This, together with the little time one of my age may expect to live, makes it necessary for me to request earnestly, which I hereby do, that the Congress would be pleased, without further delay, to examine those accounts; and if they find therein any article or articles which they do not understand or approve, that they would cause me to be

acquainted with the same, that I may have an opportunity of offering such explanations or reasons in support of them as may be in my power, and then that the accounts may be finally closed.

I hope the Congress will soon be able to attend to this business for the satisfaction of the public, as well as in condescension to my request. In the mean time, if there be no impropriety in it, I would desire that this letter, together with another\* relating to the same subject, the copy of which is hereunto annexed, may be put upon their minutes.

With every sentiment of respect and duty to Congress, I am, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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\* A letter to Mr. Barclay, written in France, see p. 522.

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**THE CORRESPONDENCE**

**OF**

**JOHN ADAMS,**

**ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS TO FRANCE, MIN-  
ISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY TO HOLLAND, AND  
ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS FOR NEGO-  
TIATING THE TREATY OF PEACE.**

JOHN ADAMS WAS a delegate in the first Continental Congress, and one of the most active, zealous, and efficient members of that body. For three years his labors in Congress were incessant, and of the most valuable kind. It is said of him, that he belonged to more committees than any other individual, and he discharged the duties of each with remarkable promptness and energy.

The foreign affairs of the United States having assumed an important aspect, Mr. Adams was appointed a Commissioner to France in the place of Silas Deane, who had been recalled. This appointment took place on the 28th of November, 1777, and in the following February he embarked from Boston. After a long and disagreeable passage of forty-five days he arrived in France. Here he devoted himself to the duties of his mission, in conjunction with his colleagues, till Dr. Franklin was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of France, and the commission was dissolved. Having no longer any charge to execute in Europe, Mr. Adams left Paris on the 8th of March, 1779, for Nantes, where he proposed to embark for his own country. Various accidents and unexpected causes of delay kept him there till the 14th of June, when he sailed in the French frigate the *Sensible*, in company with M. de la Luzerne, who was coming to the United States in the character of Minister Plenipotentiary, as successor to M. Gerard. The French Government had voluntarily proffered to Mr. Adams a passage in this vessel, after his disappointment in not sailing in the American frigate *Alliance*, as he first expected. The *Sensible* arrived in Boston on the 3d of August.

But he was not long allowed to remain a spectator only of public events. On the 27th of September he was again chosen by Congress to represent his country abroad, as Minister Plenipotentiary for negotiating a treaty of peace and a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, when that nation should be found in a humor to recognize the independence of the United States, and enter into bonds of friendship. A task more honorable, momentous, and difficult could not have awaited him, nor one bearing more emphatical testimony of the confidence of his countrymen in his wisdom, abilities, integrity, and patriotism. On this second mission he sailed in the same frigate which had brought him from France; accommodations for this purpose having been offered to Congress by the French Minister in Philadelphia. The vessel sprang a leak on the passage, and the captain was obliged to put into Ferrol, in Spain, where he arrived on the 8th of December. From this place, that he might avoid further hazards and uncertainty of a sea voyage in the depth of winter, Mr. Adams resolved to proceed by land to the point of his destination. He reached Paris on the 9th of February, 1780. The extreme badness of the travelling at this season had detained him nearly two months on the road.

By the terms of his commission, the place of his residence was not prescribed, but for the present he chose to fix himself in Paris, as amicable relations already subsisted between the French Court and Congress, and he was instructed to consult the French Ministry in regard to any movements that might be made in effecting a treaty with England. He held a correspondence with Count de Vergennes, respecting the time and manner of carrying his instructions into execution, and on other topics; in all of which, however, his opinions and those of the French Minister were somewhat at variance. There seeming no prospect that Great Britain would soon be inclined to peace, and Mr. Adams having no special reasons for remaining at the French Court, he made a tour to Holland in the beginning of August, leaving his secretary, Mr. Dana, at Paris.

Meantime Congress had assigned him another duty. Mr. Henry Laurens had been appointed, as early as November, 1779, to negotiate a loan of ten millions abroad, but having been prevented by various causes from departing on this service, Congress, on the 20th of June following, authorized Mr. Adams to engage in the undertaking, and prosecute it till Mr. Laurens, or some other person in his stead, should arrive in Europe. This commission reached Paris four weeks after he had left that city, and Mr. Dana proceeded with it to Holland. Efforts were immediately made to procure a loan in that country, which were for a long time ineffectual, but which at last succeeded.

Mr. Laurens sailed for Holland in August, 1780, but was captured a few days afterwards by a British frigate, which conveyed him to Newfoundland, whence he was sent to England and imprisoned in the Tower. When this intelligence reached Congress, it was resolved to transfer his appointment to another person; and on the 29th of December Mr. Adams was commissioned to negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce with the United Provinces, and he was furnished with separate letters of credence as Minister Plenipotentiary to the States General and to the Prince of Orange. The state of parties in Holland, and particularly the influence of England there, rendered unavailing all advances of the American Minister towards a treaty.

It having been intimated to Mr. Adams, by the Duc de la Vauguyon, French Ambassador in Holland, that a treaty of peace was in prospect through the mediation of Russia and Austria, and that Count de Vergennes would be glad to see him on the subject at Versailles, he set off for Paris on the 6th of July, 1781. He had several interviews with the Count de Vergennes, and a correspondence of some length. After remaining three weeks at Paris and Versailles without perceiving any apparent indications that this project for a negotiation would come to maturity, he returned again to Holland.

On the 14th of June Congress appointed four other Commissioners, in conjunction with Mr. Adams, to negotiate a treaty of peace; namely, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Henry Laurens, and Thomas Jefferson, and the first commission of Mr. Adams for this purpose was annulled.

A misunderstanding having grown up between England and the United Provinces chiefly on account of the part taken by the latter in joining the northern Powers to carry into operation the plan of the armed neutrality, the French Court thought it a good opportunity for the United States to seek a treaty of alliance with Holland. This step was accordingly recommended to Congress through the French Minister at Philadelphia, and, in consequence of this suggestion, new powers were conferred on Mr. Adams, dated August the 16th, by which he was commissioned to negotiate a treaty of alliance with Holland, limited in duration to the continuance of the war with England, and conformable to the treaties then subsisting with France.

The political relations between the several Provinces of Holland were such, however, that the process of negotiation went on heavily and slowly. The English interest still continued strong, even after the war had begun, and embarrassments of various kinds were thrown in the way, which required no common share of sagacity, firmness, and perseverance to overcome. All these at length yielded; and on the 8th of October, 1782, a treaty of commerce between the United States and Holland, and a convention concerning recaptures, were signed at the Hague.

Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay had now been for three or four months actively engaged in the negotiation of peace at Paris. Having thus brought affairs to a happy issue in Holland, Mr. Adams hastened to join the Commissioners, and arrived in Paris before the end of October. From that time till the Preliminary Articles were signed, November the 30th, he applied himself unremittingly with his colleagues to the details of the negotiation. He also took part in the discussions respecting the definitive treaty which followed from time to time, and was one of the signers of that instrument.

In the winter of 1784 he was in Holland. In January, 1785, he was appointed the first American Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. James's. While in England he wrote his Defence of the American Constitutions. In the year 1788 permission was granted him to return home, where he arrived after an absence of almost nine years, during the whole of which period he had been employed in services of the highest responsibility and importance. He was shortly afterwards elected Vice President of the United States, under the first Presidency of Washington.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO JOHN ADAMS.

York, in Pennsylvania, December 3d, 1777.

Dear Sir,

With great pleasure to ourselves we discharge our duty, by enclosing to you your commission for representing these United States at the Court of France. We are by no means willing to admit a thought of your declining this important service, and therefore we send duplicates of the commission, and the late resolves, in order that you may take one set with you and send the other by another vessel.

These are important papers, and therefore we wish they may be put into the hands of a particular and careful person, with directions to deliver them himself into the hands of the Commissioners. Mr. Hancock, before he left this place, said that he intended to send a gentleman to France on some particular business. Cannot we prevail to get this gentleman to undertake the delivery of our packet to the Commissioners, they paying the expense of travel to Paris, and back again to his place of business?

It is unnecessary to mention the propriety of directing these despatches to be bagged with weight proper for sinking them, on any immediate prospect of their otherwise falling into the enemy's hands.

We sincerely wish you a quick and pleasant voyage, being truly your affectionate friends,

R. H. LEE.

JAMES LOVELL.



TO HENRY LAURENS, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Braintree, December 23d, 1777.

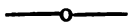
Sir,

Having been absent on a journey, I had not the honor of receiving your letters until yesterday, when one of the 28th of November, enclosing a resolution of Congress of the same day, and another of the 3d of December, enclosing a commission for Dr. Franklin, Dr. Lee, and myself, to represent the United States at the Court of France, were delivered to me in Boston.

As I am deeply penetrated with a sense of the high honor which has been done me in this appointment, I cannot but wish I were better qualified for the important trust; but as Congress are perfectly acquainted with all my deficiencies, I conclude it is their determination to make the necessary allowances; in the humble hope of which I shall submit my own judgment to theirs, and devote all the faculties I have, and all that I can acquire, to their service.

You will be pleased to accept of my sincere thanks for the polite manner in which you have communicated to me the commands of Congress, and believe me to be, with the most perfect respect and esteem, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Braintree, December 24th, 1777.

Gentlemen,

Having been absent from this State, I had not the honor of your favor of December 3d, until the 22d, when it was delivered to me with its enclosures, viz: a letter from the President to the Navy Board at Boston, and a private letter of December 8th, from Mr. Lovell. At the same time I received a packet directed to Benjamin Franklin, Arthur Lee, and John Adams, Commissioners of the United States of America in France, under seal. I also received a packet unsealed, containing—

1. Copy of a letter dated the 2d of December, from the Committee of Foreign Affairs to the Commissioners.
2. A duplicate of a commission of the 27th of November, to the Commissioners.

3. A duplicate of a resolve of December 3d ; duplicates of resolves of November 20th and 21st, and duplicates of resolves of November 10th and 22d.

4. Two letters unsealed, to Silas Deane, Paris.

5. Two printed handbills, one containing messages, &c., between the Generals Burgoyne and Gates ; the other, a copy of a letter, &c., from Mr. Strickland. The packet under seal I shall do myself the honor to forward by the first conveyance, and the other shall be conveyed, God willing, with my own hand.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest esteem, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—

TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Passy, May 21st, 1778.

Dear Sir,

I have never yet paid my respects to you since my arrival in Europe, for which seeming neglect of duty, the total novelty of the scenes about me, and the incessant avocations of business, and ceremony, and pleasure, (for this last, I find in Europe, makes an essential part of both the other two,) must plead my excuse.

The situation of the general affairs of Europe is still critical and of dubious tendency. It is still uncertain whether there will be war between the Turks and the Russians, between the Emperor and the King of Prussia, and indeed between England and France, in the opinion of many people. My own conjecture, however, is that a war will commence, and that soon.

Before this reaches you, you will be informed that a strong squadron of thirteen capital ships and several frigates has sailed from Toulon, and that another squadron is ordered to sail from Spithead. Whatever I may have heard of the destination of the first, I am not at liberty to mention it. We have no intelligence that the latter has sailed.

Chatham the great is no more, but there is so much of his wild spirit in his last speech yet left in the nation, that I have no doubt but the Administration will put all to the hazard.

We are happy to hear by the frigate *La Sensible*, which has returned to Brest, that the treaty arrived safe at Casco Bay. We

hope to have the earliest intelligence of the ratification of it. The Commissioners from England, of the 22d of April, will meet, as we suppose, with nothing but ridicule. The King of Prussia is yet upon the reserve concerning America, or rather, forgetting his promise, has determined not to acknowledge our independence at present. His reason is obvious: he wants the aid of those very German princes who are most subservient to Great Britain, who have furnished her with troops to carry on the war against us, and, therefore, he does not choose to offend them by an alliance with us at present. Spain is on the reserve, too, but there is not the least doubt entertained here of her intention to support America. In Holland there is more friendship for us than I was aware of before I came here; at least, they will take no part against us.

Our affairs in this kingdom I find in a state of confusion and darkness that surprises me. Prodigious sums of money have been expended, and large sums are yet due; but there are no books of account, nor any documents from whence I have been able to learn what the United States have received as an equivalent.

There is one subject which lies heavily on my mind, and that is the expense of the Commissioners. You have three Commissioners at this Court, each of whom lives at an expense of at least three thousand pounds sterling a year, I fear at a greater expense. Few men in the world are capable of living at a less expense than I am; but I find the other gentlemen have expended from three to four thousand a year each, and one of them from five to six. And by all the inquiries I have been able to make, I cannot find any article of expense which can be retrenched.\*

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\*In another letter, which Mr. Adams afterwards wrote to Mr. Samuel Adams, he says the account of the Commissioners' expenses here given is "exaggerated," and "put much too high," owing to his having been but a short time in Paris, and not being accurately informed on the subject. See this letter hereafter, dated February 14th, 1779, in the present volume.

By a letter from Mr. Arthur Lee, dated May 9th, 1778, containing a transcript from the banker's book, it appears, that from December, 1776, to March, 1778, a period of fifteen months, Silas Deane received on his private account, \$20,926; Arthur Lee, \$12,749; and Dr. Franklin, \$12,214.—See *Arthur Lee's Correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 494, where the above sums are stated in livres, and they are here reduced to dollars by the rule practiced at that time, of allowing five livres and eight sols to the dollar. The fractions are omitted in the reduction. It must be observed that the above payments are not a specification of the amounts actually received for the period in question, because the Commissioners may have had other expenses for

The truth is, in my humble opinion, our system is wrong in many particulars :

1. In having three Commissioners at this Court: one in the character of Envoy is enough. At present, each of the three is considered in the character of a public Minister Plenipotentiary, which lays him under an absolute necessity of living up to this character; whereas, one alone would be obliged to incur no greater expense, and would be quite sufficient for all the business of a public Minister.

2. In leaving the salaries of these Ministers at an uncertainty, you will never be able to obtain a satisfactory account of the public money: while this system continues; it is a temptation to live at too great an expense, and gentlemen will feel an aversion to demanding vigorous account.

3. In blending the business of a public Minister with that of a commercial agent. The business of various departments is by this means so blended, and the public and private expenses so confounded with each other, that I am sure no satisfaction can ever be given to the public of the disposition of their interests; and I am very confident that jealousies and suspicions will hereafter arise against the characters

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which they afterwards drew on the banker, but these sums may serve as a tolerably correct indication of their expenses, and were probably intended as such by Mr. Lee. At this time no fixed salary was allowed; but Congress resolved that all expenses should be paid, and that such an additional compensation should be granted as might afterwards be deemed expedient by Congress.

On the 1st of June, 1778, Mr. Lee wrote to Congress: "I am of opinion, with my colleague, Mr. Adams, that it would be better for the public that the appointment of your public Ministers were fixed, instead of being left at large, and their expenses indefinite. From experience, I find the expense of living in that character cannot well be less than three thousand pounds sterling a year, (\$13,333,) which I believe is as little as is allowed to any public Minister beyond the rank of consul."—*Arthur Lee's Correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 499.

The original mode of paying Ministers abroad continued, however, till October 4th, 1779, when Congress

"Resolved, That each of the Ministers Plenipotentiary be allowed at the rate of two thousand five hundred pounds sterling (\$11,111) per annum; and each of their secretaries at the rate of one thousand pounds sterling (\$4,444) per annum, in full for their services and expenses respectively.

"That the salary of each of the said officers be computed from the time of leaving his place of abode to enter on the duties of his office, and be continued three months after the notice of his recall."—*Secret Journals*, vol. 2, p. 272.

The salaries continued fixed at the above sums during the remainder of the Revolution, and till May 7th, 1784, when the salary of the Ministers was reduced to \$9,000, and that of the Secretaries to \$3,000 per annum.

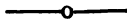
of gentlemen who may, perhaps, have acted with perfect integrity and the fairest intentions for the public good.

My idea is this: separate the offices of public Ministers from those of commercial agents;\* recall, or send to some other Court, all the public Ministers but one at this Court; determine with precision the sum that shall be allowed to the remaining one for his expenses, for his salary, and for his time, risk, trouble, &c.; and when this is done see that he receives no more than his allowance. The inconveniences arising from the multiplicity of Ministers and the complication of business are infinite.

Remember me with the most tender affection to my worthy colleagues, and to all others to whom you know they are due.

I am, your friend and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE COMMERCIAL COMMITTEE.

Passy, May 24th, 1778.

Gentlemen,

I find that the American affairs on this side of the Atlantic are in a state of disorder very much resembling that which is so much to be regretted on the other, and arising, as I suppose, from the same general causes, the novelty of the scenes, the inexperience of the actors, and the rapidity with which great events have succeeded each other. Our resources are very inadequate to the demands made upon us, which are perhaps unnecessarily increased by several irregularities of proceeding.

We have in some places two or three persons who claim the character of American agents, agent for commercial affairs, and continental agent, for they are called by all these different appellations. In one quarter, one gentleman claims the character from the appointment of Mr. William Lee, another claims it from the appointment of the Commissioners at Passy, and a third from the appointment of the Commercial Committee of Congress. This

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\* Dr. Franklin expresses this opinion very strongly on several occasions; and after he was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary, with the duties of commercial agent attached to his office, he repeatedly solicited Congress to separate these duties, and to leave him in charge only of those branches of the business which pertained to him in the character of Minister.—See *Franklin's Correspondence*, vol. 2, pp. 66, 79, 86, 95.

introduces a triple expense, and much confusion and delay. These evils have been accidental, I believe, and unavoidable, but they are evils still, and ought to be removed.

One person at Bordeaux, another at Nantes, and a third perhaps at Havre de Grace, or Dunkirk, would be amply sufficient for all public purposes; and to these persons all orders from Congress, or the Commercial Committee, or the Commissioners at Paris, ought to be addressed. To the same persons all public ships of war, and all other ships belonging to the United States, and their prizes, ought to be addressed; and all orders for the supplies of provisions, clothing, repairs of vessels, &c., as well as all orders for shipping of merchandizes, or warlike stores, for the United States, ought to go through their hands. We have such abuses and irregularities every day occurring, as are very alarming. Agents of various sorts are drawing bills upon us, and the commanders of vessels of war are drawing upon us for expenses and supplies which we never ordered, so that our resources will soon fail if a speedy stop is not put to this career.

And we find it so difficult to obtain accounts from agents of the expenditure of moneys, and of the goods and merchandizes shipped by them, that we can never know the true state of our finances, or when and in what degree we have executed the orders of Congress for sending them arms, clothes, medicines, or other things.

In order to correct some of the abuses, and to bring our affairs into a little better order, I have constantly given my voice against paying for things we never ordered, against paying persons who have never been authorized, and against throwing our affairs into a multiplicity of hands in the same place. But the consequence has been so many refusals of demands and requests, that I expect much discontent will arise from it, and many clamors. Whether the appointment by Congress of one or more consuls for this kingdom would remedy these inconveniences, I must submit to their wisdom.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

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TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, July 9th, 1778.

My dear Friend,

I had yesterday the honor of receiving the despatches from Congress, which were sent by the *Saratoga* from Baltimore, arrived

at Nantes, convoyed in by the *Boston*, Captain Tucker, (who was returning from a short cruise, and who has sent in four prizes,) and those by the *Spy*, from New London, arrived at Brest, and the inexpressible pleasure of your private letters by the same vessels. You acquaint me that you had written to me eight or nine times, which has given me some anxiety, as these letters are the first I have received from you or from any member of Congress since my arrival in France.

The ratification of the treaty gives universal joy to this Court and nation, who seem to be sincerely and deeply rejoiced at this connexion between the two countries.

There is no declaration of war as yet at London or Versailles, but the ships of the two nations are often fighting at sea, and there is not the smallest doubt but war will be declared, unless Britain should miraculously have wisdom given her to make a treaty with the Congress like that which France has made. Spain has not made a treaty, but be not deceived nor intimidated; all is safe in that quarter.

The unforeseen dispute in Bavaria has made the Empress Queen and King of Prussia cautious of quarrelling with Great Britain, because her connexion with a number of the German Princes whose aid each of those potentates is soliciting, makes her friendship, or at least her neutrality in the German war, of importance to each. But this will do no hurt to America.

You have drawn so many bills of exchange upon us, and sent us so many frigates, every one of which costs us a large sum of money, so many merchandizes and munitions of war have been sent, whether arrived or not, and we expect so many more drafts upon us, that I assure you I am very uneasy concerning our finances here. We are laboring to hire money, and have some prospect of success, but I am afraid not for such sums as will be wanted.

Let me entreat you to omit no opportunity of writing to me; send me all the newspapers, journals, &c., and believe me your friend and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—  
TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, July 26th, 1778.

My dear Friend,  
Your favors of May 16th and 25th, by Captain Barnes, reached

me yesterday. These, with those by Niles from Connecticut, and those by the Saratoga from Baltimore, are all that I received from you, or from any body at Congress; which gives me pain, because your other letters must have miscarried, and I hold your letters in so high esteem, that I cannot be willing to lose one.

The robbery of Folger's packet, by all that I can learn, must have been committed by a traitor, who made his escape to England. But Dr Franklin and Mr. Lee, who were acquainted with this transaction, will, I suppose, develop the mystery as far as they are able. One of these gentlemen has some other suspicions, but I believe the fugitive to England was the only thief.

Mr. Deane, whom you mention, is no doubt with you before now, but if the Count d'Estaing has not been able to strike a decisive blow before the arrival of Byron, I should fear that some misfortune has befallen him since the junction of Byron and Howe. We are, however, anxious to know the naval manœuvres in America, as well as those of the armies. Mr. Deane complains of ill treatment, and claims great merit for his services. I shall not add to the ill treatment, nor depreciate the merit, but it will never do for Congress to dread the resentment of their servants. I have heard a great deal in this country concerning his conduct—great panegyrics and harsh censures. But I believe he has neither the extravagant merit that some persons ascribe to him, nor the gross faults to answer for which some others impute or suspect. I believe he was a diligent servant of the public, and rendered it useful service. His living was expensive, but whether he made the vast profit to himself that some persons suspect, I know not, or whether any profit at all. One thing I know, that my family will feel that I shall not imitate him in this faculty, if it really was his; for which reason I wish Congress would determine what allowance we shall have for our time, that I might know whether my family can live upon it or not.

Extravagant claims to merit are always to be suspected. General Gates was the ablest negociator you ever had in Europe;\* and next to him, General Washington's attack upon the enemy at Germantown. I do not know, indeed, whether this last affair had not more influence upon the European mind than that of Saratoga. Although the attempt was unsuccessful, the military gentlemen in Europe

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\* The capture of Burgoyne was the immediate cause of the treaty of alliance between France and the United States.



considered it as the most decisive proof that America would finally succeed.

And you may depend upon it, although your agents in Europe were to plead with the tongues of men and angels, although they had the talents and the experience of Mazarin, or the integrity of d'Asset, your army in America will have more success than they.

I foresee there will be diversities of sentiment concerning this gentleman, (Deane,) and perhaps warm debates. Perhaps there will be as much as there has been about a General in the northern department. All that I request is, that I may not be drawn into the dispute. Europe has not charms enough for me to wish to stay here to the exclusion of able negociators, much less at the expense of heat and divisions in Congress. How well united you were in the choice of me I never was informed, and how soon attempts may be made to displace me I know not. But one thing I beg of my friends, and one only, that if any attempt of that kind should be made, they would give me up, rather than continue my residence at the expense of debates in Congress and by the favor of small majorities.

If I were capable of speculating in English funds, or of conducting private trade, I might find opportunities here to make a private profit, and might have inducements from private considerations to continue here: but this will never be my case, and I am very well persuaded that Congress will never grant me so much for my services here, as I could earn by my profession in Boston, to which I will return with submission to old ocean, old Boreas, and British men of war, the moment I am released from this station. I wish, however, that Congress would determine what allowance they will grant, that honest men may not be made or suspected otherwise. As to the public, I am fully persuaded that its interests are not at all concerned in my residence here, as there is a great plenty of persons quite as well qualified.

I am, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, July 27th, 1778.

Sir,

I thank you for your kind congratulations on the favorable

appearances in our American concerns, and for so politely particularizing one of the most inconsiderable of them, my safe arrival in France, which was after a very inconvenient passage of forty-five days.

Your letter to Mr. Izard I had the pleasure to send to him immediately in Paris, where he resides, the Court of Tuscany being so connected with that of Vienna as to discourage hitherto his departure for Italy. He did me the honor of a visit yesterday, when we had much conversation upon American affairs.

Your other letter to your daughter-in-law, I have forwarded by a safe opportunity. You may depend upon my conveying your letters to any of your friends by the best opportunities and with despatch. The more of your commands you send me, the more pleasure you will give me.

War is not declared, that is, no manifesto has been published, but each nation is daily manufacturing materials for the other's manifesto, by open hostilities. In short, sir, the two nations have been at war ever since the recall of the Ambassadors. The King of France has given orders to all his ships to attack the English, and has given vast encouragement to privateers.

The King of Great Britain and his council have determined to send instructions to their Commissioners in America to offer us independency, provided we will make peace with them, separate from France. This appears to me to be the last effort to seduce, deceive, and divide. They know that every man of honor in America must receive this proposition with indignation. But they think they can get the men of no honor to join them by such a proposal, and they think the men of honor are not a majority. What has America done to give occasion to that King and council to think so unworthily of her.

The proposition is in other words this: "America, you have fought me until I despair of beating you; you made an alliance with the first Power of Europe, which is a great honor to your country and a great stability to your cause, so great that it has excited my highest resentment, and has determined me to go to war with France. Do you break your faith with that Power and forfeit her confidence, as well as that of all the rest of mankind forever, and join me to beat her, or stand by neuter and see me do it, and for all this I will acknowledge your independency, because I think in

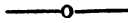
that case you cannot maintain it, but will be an easy prey to me afterwards, who am determined to break my faith with you, as I wish you to do yours with France."

My dear countrymen, I hope you will not be allured upon the rocks by the syren song of peace. They are now playing a sure game. They have run all hazards, but now they hazard nothing.

I know your application is incessant and your moments precious, and, therefore, that I ask a great favor in requesting your correspondence, but the interests of the public, as well as private friendship, induce me to do it.

I am, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Passy, July 28th, 1778.

My dear Sir,

The Sovereign of Britain and his council have determined to instruct their Commissioners to offer you independence, provided you will disconnect yourselves from France.

The question arises, how came the King and Council by authority to offer this? It is certain that they have it not.

In the next place, is the treaty of alliance between us and France now binding upon us? I think there is not room to doubt it; for declarations and manifestoes do not make the state of war, they are only publications of the reasons of war. Yet the message of the King of Great Britain to both Houses of Parliament, and their answers to that message, were as full a declaration of war as ever was made, and accordingly hostilities have been frequent ever since. This proposal, then, is a modest invitation to a gross act of infidelity and breach of faith. It is an observation that I have often heard you make, that "France is the natural ally of the United States." This observation is, in my opinion, both just and important. The reasons are plain. As long as Great Britain shall have Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas, or any of them, so long will Great Britain be the enemy of the United States, let her disguise it as much as she will.

It is not much to the honor of human nature, but the fact is certain, that neighboring nations are never friends in reality. In the times of the most perfect peace between them, their hearts

and their passions are hostile, and this will certainly be the case forever between the thirteen United States and the English colonies. France and England, as neighbors and rivals, never have been and never will be friends. The hatred and jealousy between the nations are eternal and irradicable. As we, therefore, on the one hand, have the surest ground to expect the jealousy and hatred of Great Britain, so on the other we have the strongest reasons to depend upon the friendship and alliance of France, and no one reason in the world to expect her enmity or her jealousy, as she has given up every pretension to any spot of ground on the Continent. The United States, therefore, will be for ages the natural bulwark of France against the hostile designs of England against her, and France is the natural defence of the United States against the rapacious spirit of Great Britain against them. France is a nation so vastly eminent, having been for so many centuries what they call the dominant power of Europe, being incomparably the most powerful at land, that united in a close alliance with our States, and enjoying the benefit of our trade, there is not the smallest reason to doubt but both will be a sufficient curb upon the naval power of Great Britain.

This connexion, therefore, will forever secure a respect for our States in Spain, Portugal, and Holland, too, who will always choose to be upon friendly terms with Powers who have numerous cruisers at sea, and indeed in all the rest of Europe. I presume, therefore, that sound policy as well as good faith will induce us never to renounce our alliance with France, even although it should continue us for some time in war. The French are as sensible of the benefits of this alliance to them as we are, and they are determined as much as we to cultivate it.

In order to continue the war, or at least that we may do any good in the common cause, the credit of our currency must be supported. But how? Taxes, my dear sir, taxes. Pray let our countrymen consider and be wise; every farthing they pay in taxes is a farthing's worth of wealth and good policy. If it were possible to hire money in Europe to discharge the bills, it would be a dreadful drain to the country to pay the interest of it. But I fear it will not be. The house of Austria has sent orders to Amsterdam to hire a very great sum, England is borrowing great sums, and France is borrowing largely. Amidst such demands for money, and by Powers who offer better terms, I fear we shall not be able to succeed.

Pray write me as often as you can, and believe me your friend  
and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO JAMES WARREN.

Passy, August 4th, 1778.

My dear Sir,

Your kind favor of July the 1st was brought here yesterday from Bordeaux, where Captain Ayres has arrived, but was not delivered to me till this day. This is the second only received from you. I have infinite satisfaction in learning from all parts of America the prosperous train of our affairs, and the unanimity and spirit of the people. Every vessel brings us fresh accessions of ardor to the French, and of depression to the English, in the war that has now begun in earnest.

The resolutions of Congress upon the Conciliatory Bills, the address to the people, the ratification of the treaty, the answer to the Commissioners, the President's letter, the message of G. Livingston, and the letter of Mr. Drayton, are read here with an avidity that would surprise you. It is not one of the least misfortunes of Great Britain, that she has to contend with so much eloquence; that there are such painters to exhibit her atrocious actions to the world, and transmit them to posterity. Every publication of this kind seems to excite the ardor of the French nation, and of their fleets and armies, as much as if they were Americans.

While American orators are thus employed in perpetuating the remembrance of the injustice and cruelty of Great Britain towards us, the French fleet has been giving such a check to her naval pride as she has not experienced before for many ages. The vessel which is to carry this, will carry information of a general engagement between d'Orvilliers and Keppel, which terminated in a disgraceful flight of the English fleet. We hope soon to hear of d'Estaing's success, which would demonstrate to the universe that Britain is no longer mistress of the ocean. But the events of war are always uncertain, and a misfortune may have happened to the French fleet in America. But even if this should be the case, which I do not believe, still Britain is not mistress of the sea, and every day will bring fresh proofs that she is not. The springs of her naval power are dried away.

I have hitherto had the happiness to find that my pulse beat in exact unison with those of my countrymen. I have ventured with some freedom to give my opinion as to what Congress would do with the Conciliatory Bills, with the Commissioners, with the treaty &c., &c., and every packet brings us proceedings of Congress, according in substance, but executed in a manner infinitely exceeding my abilities. Nothing has given me more joy than the universal disdain that is expressed both in public and private letters, at the idea of departing from the treaty and violating the public faith. This faith is our American glory, and it is our bulwark. It is the only foundation on which our union can rest securely; it is the only support of our credit both in finance and commerce; it is our sole security for the assistance of foreign Powers. If the British Court with their arts could shake it, or the confidence in it, we should be undone forever. They would triumph over us, after all our toil and danger. They would subjugate us more entirely than they ever intended. The idea of infidelity cannot be treated with too much resentment or too much horror. The man who can think of it with patience is a traitor at heart, and ought to be execrated as one who adds the deepest hypocrisy to the blackest treason.

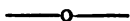
Is there a sensible hypocrite in America, who can start a jealousy that religion may be in danger? From whence can this danger arise? Not from France; she claims no inch of ground upon your continent. She claims no legislative authority over you, no negative upon your laws, no right of appointing you bishops, nor of sending you missionaries. Besides, the spirit of crusading for religion is not in France.

The rage for making proselytes, which has existed in former centuries, is no more. There is a spirit more liberal here in this respect than I expected to find. Where has been the danger to the religion of the Protestant cantons of Switzerland, from an alliance with France, which has subsisted with entire harmony for one hundred and fifty years, or thereabouts? But this subject is fitter for ridicule than serious argument, as nothing can be clearer than that, in this enlightened tolerant age, at this vast distance, without a claim or color of authority, with an express acknowledgment and warranty of sovereignty, this, I had almost said tolerant nation, can never endanger our religion.

The longer I live in Europe, and the more I consider our affairs, the more important our alliance with France appears to me. It is a

rock upon which we may safely build. Narrow and illiberal prejudices, peculiar to John Bull, with which I might perhaps have been in some degree infected when I was John Bull, have now no influence over me. I never was, however, much of John Bull. I was John Yankee, and such I shall live and die. Is Great Britain to be annihilated? No such thing. A revolution in her government may possibly take place; but whether in favor of despotism or republicanism, is the question. The scarcity of virtue, and even the semblance of it, seems an invincible obstacle to the latter; but the annihilation of a nation never takes place. It depends wholly on herself to determine whether she shall sink down into the rank of the middling Powers of Europe, or whether she shall maintain the second place in the scale. If she continues this war, the first will be her fate; if she stops short in her mad career and makes peace, she may still be in the second predicament. America will grow with astonishing rapidity, and England, France, and every other nation in Europe, will be the better for her prosperity. Peace, which is her dear delight, will be her wealth and her glory, for I cannot see the seed of a war with any part of the world in future, but with Great Britain, and such States as may be weak enough, if any such there should be, to become her allies. That such a peace may be speedily concluded, and that you and I may return to our farms to enjoy the fruits of it, spending our old age in recounting to our children the toils and dangers we have encountered for their benefit, is the wish of your friend,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Passy, August 5th, 1778.

My dear Sir,

Your letter of the 20th of June, by Captain Ayres, from Boston, had a quick passage. He sailed on the 4th of July, and your letters were brought to Passy from Bordeaux, where she arrived the 3d of August.

I thank you, sir, for the kind expressions of your obliging anxiety for me. The uncertainty in which you remain so long, concerning the fate of the Boston, must have been occasioned by the capture of many vessels by which the news was sent, together with many

bundles of English newspapers and pamphlets. The prompt ratification of the treaties, as well as the dignity with which you have received the letters from the British Commissioners, has given great satisfaction here. The two articles, the Count de Vergennes agreed, when we presented your instructions to him on that head, should be given up.

The confederation is an important object, and nothing is more wished for in Europe than its completion, and the finishing of the separate governments. The eagerness to complete the American code, and the strains of panegyric in which they speak and write of those parts of it which have been published in Europe, are very remarkable, and seem to indicate a general revolution in the sentiments of mankind upon the subject of government. Our currency cannot engage our attention too much. And the more we think of it, the more we shall be convinced, that taxation, deep and broad taxation, is the only sure and lasting remedy. Loans in Europe will be very difficult to obtain. The Powers at war, or at the eve of war, have such vast demands, and offer terms so much better than ours, that nothing but sheer benevolence to our cause can induce any person to lend us. Besides a large foreign debt would be a greater evil, for what I know, than a paper currency. Moreover, your large drafts on the Commissioners here, from various quarters, are like to consume more money than we can borrow. We shall do, however, all we can.

I have hitherto had the good fortune to preserve a good understanding with the gentleman you mention, and shall endeavor to continue it. I have long known him to be employed very ably and usefully for our country, and his merits and services, his integrity and abilities, will induce me to cultivate his friendship, as far as I can consistently with the public service. I wish I could converse with you freely upon this subject, but it would lead me into too long a detail. It has given me much grief, since my arrival here, to find so little harmony among many respectable characters; so many mutual jealousies, and so much distrust of one another. As soon as I perceived it, I determined neither to quarrel with any man here, because he had quarreled with another, or because another had quarreled with him; nor to make any man my bosom friend, because he was the bosom friend of any other; but to attend solely to the public service, and give my voice upon all occasions as I should

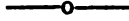


think that justice and policy required, whether it agreed with the opinion of one man or another. I cannot be more particular. If I were to take every man's word, I should think there was not one disinterested American here, because it is very certain that there is nobody here that everybody speaks well of. There is no doubt to be made, that private interest has some influence here upon some minds, and that our mercantile affairs and competitions have occasioned some altercation. But there is, I think, rather more of mutual reproaches, of interested views and designs, rather more of animosity among the Americans here, than I remember to have seen any where else. I will have nothing to do with any of these things. I will have nothing to do with designs and endeavors to run down characters, to paint in odious colors indifferent actions, to excite or propagate suspicions without evidence, or to foment or entertain prejudices of any kind, if I can possibly avoid it. I am really ashamed to write to you in this enigmatical manner, which is not natural to me ; but I know not how to write clearer at present. I sometimes differ in sentiment from each of my colleagues, and sometimes agree with each ; yet I do not trim, or at least I think I do not. It has been and shall be my endeavor to heal and reconcile, to the utmost of my power. Yet I fear, that some gentlemen are gone over to America, heated with altercation and inflamed with prejudice. Others still remain here, it is to be feared, in the same temper of mind, and probably many letters have gone over loaded. These things will probably make you uncomfortable, as they have and will make us. I really wish, however, that you would remove the cause of this, and appoint consuls to do the mercantile business. If you do not, however, I am determined to go on, giving my voice clearly and without equivocation, and at the same time without wrangling or ill will.

We expect on Sunday, the 9th, the English accounts of the sea-fight between d'Orvilliers and Keppel, which happened on the 27th ultimo, in which the former obtained the laurels, whatever representation the latter may make of it. There are so many facts, attested by so many respectable witnesses, that there is no room to doubt but that the Britons lost the day ; a terrible loss indeed to a nation who have the empire of the sea to maintain in order almost to preserve their existence. It is not being equal to France at sea ; they must support a clear and decided superiority, not only to

France, but to France and Spain in conjunction, not to mention our States, in order to preserve their rank among the Powers of Europe. My tenderest respects to all good men.

I am, dear Sir, affectionately yours, JOHN ADAMS.



TO HENRY LAURENS, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, August 27th, 1778.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose the last gazettes, by which Congress will see the dearth of news in Europe at present. We expect an abundance of it at once soon, as we have nothing from America since the 4th of July.

The French fleet went out again from Brest the 17th, but we have not yet heard that the English fleet is out. While the two fleets were in the harbor, the British East India fleet and another small West India fleet got in; a misfortune of no small moment, as the British finances will receive by means of it a fresh supply of money for the present, and their fleet a considerable reinforcement of seamen.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, September 7th, 1778.

Sir,

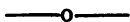
I have the honor to enclose to Congress all the newspapers I have by me, enough to show that we have nothing very important here at present. The French and British fleets are again at sea, and we hourly expect intelligence of a second battle; but our expectations from America are still more interesting and anxious, having nothing from them since the 3d of July, except what is contained in the English gazettes.

Events have probably already passed in America, although not known in Europe, which shall determine the great question, whether we shall have a long war or a short one. The eyes of all Europe are fixed on Spain, whose armaments by sea and land are vastly expensive

and extremely formidable, but whose designs are a profound impenetrable secret ; time, however will discover them. In the mean time, we have the satisfaction, to be sure that they are not inimical to America. For this, we have the word of a King, signified by his Ministers ; a King who they say never breaks his word, but, on the contrary, has given many striking proofs of his sacred regard to it.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest esteem, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, September 11th, 1778.

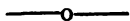
Sir,

I have the honor to enclose to Congress the latest gazettes. We have no other intelligence than is contained in them.

Since the 11th of July, the date of Lord Howe's announcing the arrival of the Count d'Estaing off Sandy Hook, we have not a syllable from America, by the way of England. In France, we have nothing from America since July 3d. This long interval leaves a vast scope for imagination to play, and, accordingly, there is no end to the speculations prompted by the hopes and fears of the nations of Europe. We are weary of conjectures, and must patiently wait for time to end them.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO M. RAY DE CHAUMONT.

Passy, September 15th, 1778.

Sir,

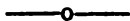
As our finances are, at present, in a situation seriously critical, and as I hold myself accountable to Congress for every part of my conduct, even to the smallest article of my expenses, I must beg the favor of you to consider what rent we ought to pay you for this house and furniture, both for the time past and to come. Every part of your conduct towards me, and towards our Americans in general, and in all our affairs, has been polite and obliging, as far as I have had an opportunity of observing, and I have no doubt it will continue so ; yet it is not reasonable that the United States should be under

so great an obligation to a private gentleman, or that two of their representatives should occupy, for so long a time, so elegant a seat, with so much furniture and so fine accommodations, without any compensation; and in order to avoid the danger of the disapprobation of our constituents on the one hand, for living here at too great or too uncertain an expense, and on the other, the censure of the world for not making sufficient compensation to a gentleman who has done so much for our convenience, it seems to me necessary that we should come to an *eclaircissement* upon this head.

As you have an account against the Commissioners, or against the United States, for several other matters, I should also be obliged to you if you would send it in as soon as possible, as every day renders it more and more necessary for us to look into our affairs with the utmost precision.

I am, sir, with much esteem and respect, your most obedient, humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



M. RAY DE CHAUMONT TO JOHN ADAMS.

Translation.

Passy, September 18th, 1778.

Sir,

I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 15th instant, making inquiry as to the rent of my house, in which you live, for the past and the future. When I consecrated my house to Dr. Franklin and his associates who might live with him, I made it fully understood that I should expect no compensation, because I perceived that you had need of all your means to send to the succor of your country, or to relieve the distresses of your countrymen escaping from the chains of their enemies. I pray you, sir, to permit this arrangement to remain, which I made when the fate of your country was doubtful. When she shall enjoy all her splendor, such sacrifices on my part will be superfluous, or unworthy of her; but at present they may be useful, and I am most happy in offering them to you.

There is no occasion for strangers to be informed of my proceeding in this respect. It is so much the worse for those who would not do the same if they had the opportunity, and so much the better for me

to have immortalized my house by receiving into it Dr. Franklin and his associates.

I have the honor to be, sir, with the most perfect respect, &c.,  
LE RAY DE CHAUMONT.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, September 20th, 1778.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose the latest gazettes, which contain all the news of Europe. The news from America by the way of London, which are contained in the *Courrier de l'Europe*, of the 15th instant, have raised our expectations and increased our anxiety. We are not without apprehensions that the Count d'Estaing may fall in with the combined fleets of Howe and Byron.

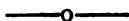
The English are beginning to elevate their heads a little, and to renew their old insolent language, both in coffee-houses and in daily papers. The refugees from America, unable to bear the thought of being excluded forever from that country, and still less that of soliciting for pardon from their injured countrymen, and returning to see established principles, which they detest, and forms of government against which they have ever combated, are said to be indefatigable in instilling hopes into the King and Ministers, that by persevering another campaign, and sending twenty thousand more men to America, the people will be worn out, and glad to petition for dependence upon them.

They flatter themselves and others with hopes that Spain will remain neuter, and that by intriguing in France, they can get the French Ministry changed, and then that they shall have little trouble from this quarter. Nothing can be more whimsical, more groundless or ridiculous, than all this. Yet it is said to please the and amuse credulous multitude in that devoted island. Those who pretend to know the bosoms of the persons highest in power in that kingdom, say that they delight themselves with the thought that it is not in their power to reduce America once more to their yoke, yet they are able to harass, to distress, and to render miserable those whom they cannot subdue. That they have some little compunction at the thought that they shall be ranked in history with the Philips and

Alvas, the Alberts and Gislors of this world; but this, instead of producing repentance and reformation as it ought, engenders nothing but rage, envy, and revenge. This revenge, however, is impotent. Their marine and their finances are in so bad a condition that it is with infinite difficulty they can cope with France alone, even at sea; and it seems to be the intention of Providence that they shall be permitted to go on with their cruelties just long enough to wean the affection of every American heart, and make room for connexions between us and other nations, who have not the ties of language, of acquaintance, and of custom to bind us.

I am, with the most perfect respect, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO RALPH IZARD.

Passy, September 25th, 1778.

Sir,

I have received with much pleasure your favor of yesterday's date. No apology was necessary for the delay of so few days to answer a letter, the contents of which did not, from any public consideration, require haste. My most fervent wishes mingle themselves with yours, that the happy time may soon arrive when we may enjoy the blessings of peace, uninterrupted by disputes with any Power whatever. But alas! my apprehensions are very strong, that we are yet at a distance from so great a felicity.

You will readily acknowledge the impropriety of my entering into the question concerning the duty of the Commissioners here, to have made the communications of the treaty, which you mention. But of this you may be assured, that I shall at all times hold myself obliged to you for the communication of your sentiments upon any public affair. I am therefore sorry, that in your letter you have confined yourself to that part of the treaty upon which I particularly requested your sentiments. And I now take the liberty to request your sentiments upon every part of the treaty which you conceive liable to doubtful construction, or capable of producing discontent or dispute, for I have the honor to be fully of your opinion, that it is of very great importance to be upon our guard, and avoid every cause of controversy with France as much as possible. She is, and will be, in spite of the obstacles of language, of customs, religion, and

government, our natural ally against Great Britain as long as she shall continue our enemy, and that will be at least as long as she shall hold a foot of ground in America, however she may disguise it, and whatever peace or truce she may make.

Your sentiments of the fishery, as a source of wealth, of commerce, and naval power, are perfectly just, and therefore this object will and ought to be attended to with precision and cherished with care. Nevertheless, agriculture is the most essential interest of America, and even of the Massachusetts Bay; and it is very possible to injure both, by diverting too much of the thoughts and labor of the people from the cultivation of the earth to adventures upon the sea. And this, in the opinion of some persons, has been the fault in the Massachusetts Bay. Experience has taught us in the course of this war, that the fishery was not so essential to our welfare as it was once thought. Necessity has taught us to dig in the ground instead of fishing in the sea for our bread, and we have found that the resource did not fail us.

The fishery was a source of luxury and vanity that did us much injury; yet this was the fault of the management, not of the fishery. One part of our fish went to the West India Islands for rum, and molasses to be distilled into rum, which injured our health and our morals; the other part went to Spain and Portugal for gold and silver, almost the whole of which went to London, sometimes for valuable articles of clothing, but too often for lace and ribbands. If, therefore, the cessation of the fishery for twenty years to come was to introduce the culture of flax and wool, which certainly it would do as far as would be necessary for the purposes of decency and comfort, if a loss of wealth should be the consequence of it, the acquisition of morals and of wisdom would perhaps make us gainers in the end.

These are vain speculations I know. The taste for rum and ribbands will continue, and there are no means for the New England people to obtain them so convenient as the fishery, and therefore the first opportunity will be eagerly embraced to revive it. As a nursery of seamen and a source of naval power it has been and is an object of serious importance, and perhaps indispensably necessary to the accomplishment and the preservation of our independence. I shall, therefore, always think it my duty to defend and secure our rights to it with all industry and zeal, and shall ever be obliged to you for your advice and coöperation.

Pardon the length of this letter, and believe me, with much esteem, your friend and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO RALPH IZARD.

Passy, October 2d, 1778.

Sir,

I have the pleasure of yours of the 28th, and agree with you in sentiment, that if the money which has heretofore been squandered upon articles of luxury, could for the future be applied to discharge our national debt, it would be a great felicity. But is it certain that it will? Will not the national debt itself be the means, at least a temptation to continue, if not increase, the luxury? It is with great pleasure that I see you mention sumptuary laws. But is there room to hope that our Legislatures will pass such laws? Or that the people have or can be persuaded to acquire those qualities that are necessary to execute such laws? I wish your answer may be in the affirmative, and that it may be found true in fact and experience. But much prudence and delicacy will be necessary, I think, to bring all our countrymen to this just way of thinking upon this head. There is such a charm to the human heart in elegance, it is so flattering to our self-love to be distinguished from the world in general by extraordinary degrees of splendor, in dress, in furniture equipage, buildings, &c., and our countrymen, by their connexion with Europe, are so much infected with the habit of this taste and these passions, that I fear it will be a work of time and difficulty, if not quite impracticable, to introduce an alteration; to which the late condition of our trade and currency, besides the great inequality of fortune, and the late enterprizes introduced by privateers are dangerous enemies.

You ask my opinion, whether the reasons in your last letter are well founded? It is observable, that the French Court were not content with the treaty proposed by Congress, which contained all, in my opinion, which is contained in the article as it now stands in the treaty of the 6th of February. What motive they had for inserting the words, "indefinite and exclusive," is left to conjecture.\*

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\* This alludes to a clause in the 10th Article of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between France and the United States.



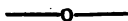
The suspicion that they meant more than the treaty proposed by Congress expressed, arises from a fact, which you remember, viz., that the French at the time of the last peace claimed more. I wish to know if there is any letter or memorial extant, in which such a claim is contained, or whether it was only a verbal claim made by their ambassadors? Whether any of the magazines of that time mention and discuss any such claim? If the fact is incontestible, that they made such a claim, it is possible that it may be revived under the words "indefinite and exclusive." But I hope it will not, and I hope it was not intended when these words were inserted. Yet I confess I cannot think of any other reason for inserting them. The word "indefinite" is not amiss, for it is a right of catching fish and drying them on land, which is a right indefinite enough. But the word "exclusive" is more mysterious. It cannot mean that Americans and all other nations shall be "excluded" from the same right of fishing and drying on land, between the same limits of Bonavista and Riche. It would be much easier to suppose, that the following words, "in that part only, and no other besides that," gave rise to the word "exclusive;" that is, that right of fishing and drying within those limits, for which we have excluded ourselves from all others. I will undertake to show better reasons, or at least as good, for this sense of the word "exclusive," as the most subtle interpreter of treaties can offer for the other, although I think them both untenable.

My opinion further is this, that as contemporaneous exposition is allowed by all writers on the law of nations to be the best interpreter of treaties, as well as of all other writings, and as neither the treaty of Utrecht, or the treaty of Paris in 1763, ever received such an interpretation as you are apprehensive may hereafter be contended for, and as the uninterrupted practice has been against such a construction, so I think that the treaty of Paris of the 6th of February, 1778, is not justly liable to such a construction, and that it cannot be attempted with any prospect of success. I agree with you, however, that as we are young States, and not practised in the art of negociation, it becomes us to look into all these things with as much caution and exactness as possible, and furnish ourselves with the best historical light, and every other honest means of securing our rights. For which reason I requested your sentiments upon this subject in writing, and continue to desire in the same way your observations on

other parts of the treaty. Reduced to writing, such things remain in letters and letter books, as well as more distinctly in the memory, and the same men or other men may recur to them at future opportunities, whereas transient conversations, especially among men who have many things to do and to think of, slip away and are forgotten. I shall make use of all the prudence I can, that these letters may not come to the knowledge of improper persons, or be used to the disadvantage of our country, or to you or me in our present capacity.

I am, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, October 2d, 1778.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose the latest gazettes, by which Congress will perceive that we have no intelligence from America since the departure of the Count d'Estaing from Sandy Hook; our anxiety is very great, but we hope that a few hours will relieve it. In the midst of a war in Germany, and between France and England, there was scarcely ever a greater dearth of news in a profound peace.

Captain McNeil, the bearer of this, makes the most conversation, having taken and destroyed, I think, thirteen vessels in the course of his last cruise, six of which have safely arrived in France; the others, not destroyed, he sent to America. His cruise will prove a great disappointment to the enemy, having deprived them of a great quantity of naval stores upon which they depended.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, October 28th, 1778.

Sir,

While we officially communicate to you the enclosed resolve, the foundation of which you cannot remain a stranger to, we must entreat you to be assiduous in sending to those Commissioners who have left France and gone to the Courts for which they were respectively appointed, all the American intelligence, which you

have greater opportunity than they of receiving from hence, particularly to Mr. Izard and Mr. William Lee. We do not often send more than one set of gazettes by one opportunity; and we hear of several vessels which have miscarried.

Congress must and will speedily determine upon the general arrangement of their foreign affairs. This is become, so far as regards you, peculiarly necessary, upon a new commission being sent to Dr. Franklin. In the mean time we hope you will exercise your whole extensive abilities on the subject of our finances. The Doctor will communicate to you our situation in that regard.

To the gazettes, and to conversation with the Marquis de la Fayette, we must refer you for what relates to our enemies, and close with our most cordial wishes for your happiness.

Your affectionate friends,

R. H. LEE.

JAMES LOVELL.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, December 3d, 1778.

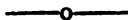
Sir,

I have the honor to enclose to Congress the latest newspapers. As they contain the speech at the opening of Parliament, and some of the debates in both Houses upon the addresses in answer to it, they are of very great importance. I learn by some newspapers and private letters, that an opinion has been prevalent in America, that the enemy intended to withdraw from the United States; and considering the cruel devastations of the war, and the unfortunate situation of our finances, nothing would give me so much joy as to see reasons to concur in that opinion, and to furnish Congress with intelligence in support of it. But I am sorry to say the reverse is too apparent. We may call it obstinacy or blindness, if we will; but such is the state of parties in England, so deep would be the disgrace, and perhaps so great the personal danger to those who have commenced and prosecuted this war, that they cannot but persevere in it at every hazard; and nothing is clearer in my mind, than that they never will quit the United States until they are either driven or starved out of them. I hope, therefore, Congress will excuse me for suggesting, that there is but one course for us to take,

which is to concert every measure, and exert every nerve, for the total destruction of the British power within the United States.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Passy, December 5th, 1778.

Dear Sir,

It is necessary that you should be minutely informed of the minutest and most secret springs of action here, if it is possible. Yet the danger is so great of our letters being taken, and getting into English newspapers, that it is very discouraging to a free correspondence. I will, however, take all the precaution in my power to have the letters sunk ; but if all these fail, and my letters become public, the world must take them as they find them, and I hope they will do more good upon the whole than harm.

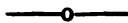
This Court and nation appear to me to be well convinced of the utility to their interests of the American alliance. But notwithstanding this, they appear to me to have too much diffidence of us, too much diffidence of the people of America, and too much reserve towards the Commissioners here. I am not satisfied in the cause of this. Whether they think that the obstacles of language, religion, laws, customs, and manners, are obstacles in the way of a perfect friendship, which cannot be removed, and therefore that they shall lose our connexion as soon as Britain comes to her senses ; or whether they are embarrassed by the conduct of Spain, and are acting in this reserved manner, and with an appearance of irresolution in hopes of her coming in ; or whether they have any prejudices against the personal characters of the Commissioners, and are loth to be unreserved with them, for fear they shall communicate either indiscreetly or by design any thing to the English, or to anybody here, who might convey it to England ; or whether all these motives together have a share in it, I know not. Thus much is certain, that ever since I have been here, I have never seen any disposition in any Minister of State to talk with any of the Commissioners, either upon intelligence from Spain or England, upon the designs or negociations of either, or any other Court in Europe, or upon the conduct of the war by sea or land, or upon their own

plans or designs of policy or war. If this reserve was ever thrown off to any one, I should think that putting it on to others had some personal motive. But it is exactly equal and alike to all three.

Each Commissioner here, before I came, had his own set of friends, admirers, and dependents, both among the French and Americans. Two households united in some degree against one, very unjustly, I fear, and very impolitically. But this set the friends of the two to injuring the third in conversation, and they cannot forbear to do it, to this day. This dissension, I suspect, has made the Ministry cautious, lest, in the course of altercations, improper use should be made of free communication. For my own part, however odd you may think it in me to say it, I have no friends, much less dependents, here, and am determined to have none, for I am convinced that competitions among these have done the evil; but I am determined if I am continued here, to have free communication with the Ministry upon these subjects, and to search them to the bottom. The Ministry are candid men and sensible, and I am sure that some eclairsissements would do good.

However, I am reckoning without my host, for by the bruits which Mr. Deane's letters have scattered, I may expect that the first vessel will bring my recall or removal to some other Court. But wherever I am, my heart will ever be anxious for the good of our country, and warm with friendship for her friends, among whom you will ever be reckoned in the foremost rank by your most obedient,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, December 6th, 1778.

Sir,

I have had the honor to enclose to Congress the speech at the opening of the British Parliament by several opportunities; but as it opens the intention of the enemy, and warns us to be prepared for all the evils which are in their power to inflict, and not in our power to prevent, I enclose it again in another form.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ROGER SHERMAN.

Passy, December 6th, 1778.

Dear Sir,

From the long series of arduous services in which we have acted together, I have had experience enough of your accurate judgment in cases of difficulty, to wish very often that I could have the benefit of it here. To me it appears, that there will be no more cordial friendship, nor for many years to come any long peace between Great Britain and America; and therefore the French alliance is and will be an important barrier to us, and ought to be cultivated with perfect faith and much tenderness. But still it is a delicate and dangerous connexion. There is danger to the simplicity of our manners, and to the principles of our constitution, and there may be danger that too much will be demanded of us. There is danger that the people and their representatives may have too much timidity, in their conduct towards this Power, and that your Ministers here may have too much diffidence of themselves, and too much complaisance for the Court. There is danger that French councils, and emissaries, and correspondents, may have too much influence in our deliberations.

I hope that this Court will not interfere, by attaching themselves to persons, parties, or measures in America. It would be ill policy, but no Court is always directed by sound policy, and we cannot be too much upon our guard. Some Americans will naturally endeavor to avail themselves of the aid of the French influence to raise their reputation, to extend their influence, to strengthen their parties, and in short to promote the purposes of private ambition and interest. But these things must be guarded against.

I wish for a letter from you as often as you can, and that you would believe me, your friend,

JOHN ADAMS.

—○—  
TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, December 8th, 1778.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose to Congress one other copy of the speech at the opening of Parliament, together with the debates in consequence of it.

The hints in those debates, especially those given out by Lord

Suffolk, are confirmed by the general strain of intelligence from London. Letters from persons, who are supposed to know, announce the determination of the cabinet to be, that Clinton and Byron, with their fleet and army, shall ravage the coast, and bombard and pillage the towns; that their army in Canada shall be reinforced, and that parties of regulars, with such Tories and Indians as they can persuade to join them, shall ravage, burn, and massacre on the frontiers of Massachusetts Bay, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas.

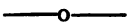
Their magnificent menaces we know it is not in their power to execute entirely, yet we may depend they will do as much as they can. They will neither acknowledge our independence, nor withdraw their fleets and armies; nor shall we get rid of them, but by destroying them, or making them prisoners, until the nation is so exhausted, and their credit so sunk, that the Minister can raise no more money.

It has been usual to consider this as a ministerial war, but I have ever thought they would some time or other discover it to be a national war; the few men of the nation, who think seriously of the business, see clearly, in the long train of consequences of American independence, the loss of their West India Islands, a great part of their East India trade, the total loss of Canada, Nova Scotia, the Floridas, all the American fisheries, a diminution of their naval power, as well as national bankruptcy, and a revolution in their Government in favor of arbitrary power. And the nation in general has a confused dread of all those things upon its spirits.

The inference they draw from all this is to go on with the war, and make it more cruel, which is the way, in the opinion of impartial persons, to make all their gloomy visions realities; whereas the only way to prevent them is to make peace now, before a total alteration takes place on both sides. However, all we can do is to be prepared for the worst they can do.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



THE COMMISSIONERS TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Sir,

Passy, May 25th, 1778.

Your favors of May 8th and 16th from Brest we duly received.

We congratulate you on your success, and safe arrival at Brest, as well as on the honor you have acquired by your conduct and bravery in taking one of the King's ships.

As we have some expectation of obtaining an exchange of prisoners from England, we would advise you to keep those you have made securely confined, though in a manner most consistent with humanity, till we have an answer from thence. For if we can get an equal number of our own seamen to man the *Drake*, she will be an additional strength to you in a future expedition. Whereas sending her with the prisoners to America, will not only weaken you by the hands you must spare to navigate her, and to keep the prisoners in subjection, but will also hazard their being retaken. We should have been happy to have been early informed of the particulars of your cruise, and of the prizes you have made, of which we have no authentic advice to this hour.

Your bill of exchange in favor of M. Bussole for twenty-four thousand livres, which you inform us you mean to distribute among the brave officers and men to whom you owe your late success, has been presented to us by M. Chaumont. We are sorry to inform you, that we have been under the disagreeable necessity of refusing payment, and that for several reasons; first, because your application should have been made to M. Schweighauser, who is the person regularly authorized to act as Continental Agent at Brest, and we are determined that all American concerns within our department shall go through his hands, as long as he shall continue in the character of American Agent, or at least until we shall find it necessary to order otherwise. Secondly, because the bill is drawn for an expense which we have no right or authority to defray. We have no authority to make presents of the public money to officers or men, however gallant and deserving, for the purposes of providing their families with clothing, or for any other purpose, nor to advance them money upon the credit of their share of prizes; nor have we authority to advance them any part of their pay or bounties; all these things belong to Congress alone, and must be done by the proper Boards in America. Our authority extends no further than to order the necessary repairs to be made to your ship, to order her to be furnished with necessary victuals, which we are ready to order M. Schweighauser to do as soon as we shall be informed by you what



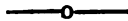
repairs and victuals are wanted, with an estimate of the amount of the expenses.

There is one thing further which we should venture to do for the benefit of your men. Upon a representation from you of the quantity of slops necessary for them, we should order M. Schweighauser to furnish your ship with them; not more, however, than one suit of clothes for each man, that you may take them on board of your ship, and deliver them out to the men as they shall be wanted, charging each man upon the ship's books with what he shall receive, that it may be deducted from his pay.

Lieutenant Simpson has stated to us your having put him under arrest for disobeying orders. As a court martial must, by order of Congress, consist of three captains, three lieutenants, and three captains of marines, and these cannot be had here, it is our desire that he may have a passage procured for him by the first opportunity to America, allowing him whatever may be necessary for his defence. As the consequences of an arrest in foreign countries are thus extremely troublesome, they should be well considered before they are made. If you are in possession of any resolution of Congress, giving the whole of ships of war, when made prizes, to the captors, we should be obliged to you for a copy of it. We should also be obliged to you for a particular account in whose hands the prizes made by you are, and in what forwardness is the sale of them.

We have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
ARTHUR LEE,  
JOHN ADAMS.



THE COMMISSIONERS TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Passy, June 3d, 1778.

Sir,

We have received sundry letters from Lieutenant Simpson, and sundry certificates from officers and others, concerning his behavior in general, and particularly upon that occasion in which he is charged with disobedience of orders. Without giving or forming any decided opinion concerning his guilt or innocence of the crime laid to his charge, we may venture to say that the certificates we have received

are very favorable to his character, and at least have reason to hope that he did not mean to disobey his orders. Be this, however, as it may, we are constrained to say that his confinement on board of any other ship than the *Ranger*, and much more his confinement in a prison on shore, appears to us to carry in it a degree of severity, which cannot be justified by reason or law. We therefore desire you would release Mr. Simpson from his imprisonment, and permit him to go at large upon his parole to go to Nantes, there to take his passage to America by the first favorable opportunity, in order to take his trial by a court martial.

We request you to transmit to us as soon as possible an account of what is due to Lieutenant Simpson, according to the ship's books, for wages.

An application has been made to us in behalf of Mr. Andrew Fallen, one of the prisoners lately made by you, and his case represented with such circumstances as have induced us to request you to let Mr. Fallen go where he will, after taking his parole in writing, that he will not communicate any intelligence which may be prejudicial to the United States; that he will not take arms against them during the war, and that he will surrender himself prisoner of war, whenever called upon by Congress or their Ministers at Paris.

We are, sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,  
ARTHUR LEE,  
JOHN ADAMS.



THE COMMISSIONERS TO LIEUTENANT SIMPSON, OF THE *RANGER*.

Passy, June 3d, 1778.

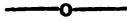
Sir,

We have received several letters from you, and several certificates from officers and others, respecting your behavior in general; as well as particularly relative to the charge of disobedience of orders for which you have been confined. It would be improper for us to give any opinion concerning this charge, which is to be determined only by a court-martial. But we have requested Captain Jones to set you at liberty upon your parole to go to Nantes, there to take your

passage to America by the first favorable opportunity, in order to take your trial by a court-martial.\*

We are, sir, your humble servants,

B. FRANKLIN,  
ARTHUR LEE.  
JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Passy, February 1st, 1779.

Gentlemen,

I had yesterday the honor of your favor of the 28th of October, enclosing a resolution of Congress, of the 22d of the same month, to which I shall give all the attention in my power.† I have much satisfaction in the reflection that I have hitherto endeavored with much sincerity to conform to the spirit of it. What you recommend to me, viz: to communicate to the Ministers of other Courts such intelligence as I may receive, will not in future be so much in my power; but as far as I can, while I stay in Europe, I shall endeavor to comply. Indeed, it is a long time that we have had no intelligence to communicate. Three vessels we know have been taken, each of which had many letters, and two of them public despatches; one that sailed from Philadelphia the 4th of November, another that sailed from the same port the 24th, and another that sailed from Boston on the 20th. These letters and despatches were all sunk, and we fear that others are lost.

It would be agreeable to me, indeed, if I were able to throw any light on the subject of finances. As to a loan in Europe, all has been done that was in our power to this end, but without the desired effect. Taxation and economy comprehend all the resources that I can think of.

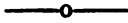
We expect the honor of a visit from the Marquis de la Fayette this morning, whom we shall receive with gratitude for his gallant and glorious exertions in one of the best causes in which a hero ever fought.

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\* See a letter from Paul Jones on this subject in the Commissioners' Correspondence, vol. I. p. 291.

† See the proceedings of Congress on Foreign Affairs, October 22d, 1776, in the Secret Journals, vol. II. p., 107.

Be pleased to accept my thanks for your kind wishes for my happiness, and believe me to be your affectionate friend,  
JOHN ADAMS.



TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Passy, February 14th, 1779.

My dear Sir,

The Marquis de la Fayette did me the honor of a visit yesterday, and delivered me your favor of the 25th of October. I am not sorry as things have been ordered, that mine of May 24th did not reach you till the 24th of October, because, as the new arrangement\* was previously made, it cannot be said that I had any hand in accomplishing it. Yet I am glad the letter has arrived, because it will show that the new system is quite agreeable to me, that is the appointment of a single Minister here. Believe me, sir, it was become very necessary.

How Congress will dispose of me, I do not know. If it is intended that I shall return, this will be very agreeable to me; and I think that this is the most probable opinion, because Mr. Deane's "Address" was on the 5th of December. Congress soon after resolved to enter on foreign affairs and go through them. The Alliance sailed on the 14th of January, and there is no resolution arrived here respecting me. I think, therefore, that it is my duty to return, and that is my present determination; but whether I shall go to Amsterdam, and from thence to St. Eustatia, or to Spain, and thence home, or in a French man-of-war to Martinique, or an American frigate to America, I have not decided. Some hint that I am to go to Holland, others to Spain. This last implies the removal of Mr. Lee, which would give me much pain on many accounts. I think him a faithful man and able. Yet what the determination will be upon the complaint of Mr. Deane, I cannot say. This is a subject which I cannot write or talk about; I would not feel such another sensation to be made a prince. I confess I expected the most dismal consequences from it, because I thought it would render business and

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\* Dissolving the commission in Paris, and appointing Dr. Franklin Minister Plenipotentiary.

confidence between us three totally impracticable; that it would destroy all confidence between this Court and us, and that it would startle Spain: that it would alienate many in Holland from us, and that it would encourage the Ministry in England and disconcert opposition so much that they would even make another vigorous campaign, besides all the evils it would produce among you. But the arrival of Dr. Franklin's commission has relieved me from many of these fears. This Court have confidence in him alone. But I think they were cautious, even of him, when he had two colleagues to whom he was obliged to communicate every thing, one of whom was upon as bad terms with him as with Mr. Deane. I have had a kind of a task here, as Mr. Lovell expresses himself; determined to be the partizan of neither, yet to be the friend of both, as far as the service would admit. I am fixed in these two opinions, that leaving the Doctor here alone is right, and that Mr. Lee is a very honest and faithful man.

You say that France should be our polar star in case war should take place. I was, I confess, surprised at this expression. Was not war sufficiently declared in the King of England's speech, and in the answers of both Houses, and in the recall of his Ambassador? Has it not been sufficiently declared by actual hostilities in most parts of the world? I suspect there will never be any other declaration of war. Yet there is in fact as complete a war as ever existed, and it will continue; for you may depend upon it, the King of France is immovably fixed in your support, and so are his Ministers. Every suspicion of a wavering disposition in this Court concerning the support of American independence is groundless, is ridiculous, is impossible. You may remember, that several years ago, several gentlemen were obliged to reason, to show that American independence was the interest of France. Since my arrival in this Kingdom, I never yet found one man, nor heard of more than one, who doubted it. If the voice of popularity is anything, I assure you that this voice was never so unanimous in America in favor of our independence as it is here. It is so much so, that if the Court were to depart from its present system in this respect, it is my clear opinion it would make this nation very unhappy, and the Court too; but I again repeat, that the Court is as fixed as the nation. And this union of sentiment arises out of such principles of nature as, without a miracle, cannot

alter. Common sense in America supported independence ; common sense in France supports the alliance, and will support it to the last. Nay, the common sense of Europe supports the common sense of France.

By the way, my regards to Mr. Paine, and tell him that I do not agree with him in his ideas about natural enemies. It is because England is the natural enemy of France, that America in her present situation is her natural friend ; at least, this is one cause although there are many others. Some of them are more glorious for human nature.

France scarcely ever made a war before that was popular in Europe. There is not a State that I can hear of, but applauds her, and wishes her success. And in point of finance and naval strength, and in skill and bravery of officers, she seems to be superior to England. You may be surprised to hear me say naval strength, yet if you consider the wretched state of the British navy, as to masts, yards, rigging, and men, you will not wonder, although their number of ships may be superior. I therefore think that all is safe. We may have further trouble, and trials of our faith and patience. But trouble is to you and me, familiar, and I begin to think it necessary for my health.

There is one thing in my letter to you exaggerated ; the expenses of the Commissioners. I had been here but a short time, and wrote according to the best guess I could make, from what I heard ; but I now think I put it much too high, yet I cannot say exactly.\*

*February 20th.* There is not the least appearance of the embarkation of troops for America, nor any intelligence of transports taken up. The national discontent is great, and tumults have arisen in Edinburgh and London. According to present appearances, they will have occasion for so many of their troops to keep their populace in order, as to be able to spare few in America. Their proclamations are all alike, from Burgoyne's to those of the Commissioners. The weaker they are, the more they puff.

I am, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

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\* See the statement here referred to, in a letter dated May 21st, 1778, p. 540, of the present volume.

## TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, February 16th, 1779.

Sir,

Last evening I had the honor of your letter of the 13th of this month, in answer to mine of the 11th.\*

I thank your Excellency for the politeness with which you have agreed to my proposition of a conference upon the subject of Mr. Deane's "Address to the People of the United States."

At the time when my letter of the 11th was written and sent to your Excellency, there were three Commissioners here, representatives of Congress, between whom it appeared to me Mr. Deane's address had a tendency to destroy all confidence, as well as between your Excellency and them, for which reason I thought it my duty to endeavor, by a conference with your Excellency, to lessen those evils as far as should be in my power.

But within a few hours after my letter of the 11th was sent, the Aid-de-Camp of the Marquis de la Fayette arrived, with despatches from Congress to Dr. Franklin, and from their Committee of Foreign Affairs to me, informing me of the new arrangement by which Dr. Franklin is constituted Minister Plenipotentiary here, and I am restored to the character of a private citizen; by which so wholly changed are the scene and the characters here, that I now think I have no right to do what, if I had continued in the character of a Commissioner, I should have thought it my indispensable duty to do.

This masterly measure of Congress, which has my most hearty approbation, and of the sincerity of which I was fully convinced before I had been two months in Europe, has taken away the possibilities of those dissensions which I so much apprehended. I shall not, therefore, give your Excellency any further trouble, than to take an opportunity of paying my respects in order to take leave, and to assure you that I shall leave this kingdom with the most entire confidence in his Majesty's benevolence to the United States, and inviolable adherence to the treaties between the two Powers, with a

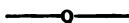
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\* These letters relate to Silas Deane and Arthur Lee, and may be found in Arthur Lee's Correspondence, vol. I. pp. 542, 545.

similar confidence in the good disposition of his Majesty's Ministers of State and of this nation towards us, and with a heart impressed with gratitude for the many civilities which I have received, in the short space I have resided here, at Brest, in the city, and in the country, and particularly from your Excellency.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

Passy, February 21st, 1779.

My dear Marquis,

The conversation with which you honored me last evening has induced me to give you the trouble of this letter upon the same subject.

It is certain that a loan of money is very much needed to redeem the redundancy of our paper bills, and without it, it is impossible to foresee what will be the consequence to their credit; and therefore every service that may be rendered in order to obtain it from this kingdom, from Spain, or Holland, will be a most acceptable service.

But without some other exertions, even a loan perhaps would be but a temporary relief; with them a smaller loan might suffice. You know perfectly well, that the enemy in America are at present very weak, and in great distress in every part. They are weak in Canada, weak in Halifax, weak in Rhode Island, weak in New York, weak in the Floridas, and weak in every one of the West India Islands. A strong armament of ships of the line, with five thousand troops directed against Halifax, Rhode Island, or New York, must infallibly succeed. So it must against the Floridas, so it must against Canada, or any one of the West India Islands.

You are very sensible that in this state of weakness, the British possessions in America depend upon each other for reciprocal support. The troops and ships derive such supplies of provisions from Canada and Nova Scotia, that if these places or either of them were lost, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the other to subsist. The West India Islands derive such supplies from the Floridas, that if they were lost the others could hardly subsist. Their fleets and armies in Canada, Halifax, Rhode Island, New York, and the Floridas, receive supplies of rum, sugar, molasses, &c.,



The peace of Germany, signed at Teschin the 13th of last May, has not equally satisfied the belligerent Powers, who were on the one part the Emperor, and on the other the King of Prussia and the Elector of Saxony, his ally.

From the multitude of writings which have appeared before and during this war, in which the causes, the motives, and the rights of it are discussed, it appears that in 1768, at the extinction of one of the branches of the House of Bavaria, which has been separated from its trunk for near five centuries, the House of Austria thought itself able, and priests and lawyers among their own subjects were complaisant enough to tell her that she had a right, to put herself in possession of the best part of the patrimony of the extinguished line.

The King of Prussia, to whose interest this augmentation of power would have been dangerous, has crowned an illustrious reign by displaying all the resources of military genius and profound policy in opposition to it. While he contended in the field, France negotiated, and the work begun by his arms was completed by the Cabinet of Versailles.

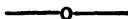
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The merit of the Chevalier de la Luzerne, who was Ambassador in Bavaria during the transaction of this business, and that of M. Marbois, the Secretary to that embassy, in accomplishing an affair of such importance, which was rendered peculiarly delicate by the late

these subjects, or to explain anything by letter, which may be in my power.

With the highest sentiments of esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO JOHN ADAMS.

Translation.

Versailles, February 21st, 1779.

Sir,

I have received the letter which you have done me the honor to write me on the 16th of this month. Although you are to be henceforth without a public character in France, be persuaded that the esteem and consideration which you have justly acquired, are by no means diminished, and I flatter myself, sir, that you will not deprive me of the pleasure of assuring you of it by word of mouth, and being at the same time the interpreter of the favorable sentiments with which the King honors you. They are the consequence of the particular satisfaction which his Majesty has received from the wise conduct you have held during the whole time of your commission, as well as the zeal you have constantly displayed, both for the cause of your country, and for the support of the alliance which attaches it to his Majesty.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, February 27th, 1779.

Sir,

I have received the letter which your Excellency did me the honor to write me on the 21st of this month. This testimony from your Excellency of those indulgent sentiments with which his Majesty is pleased to honor my sincere intentions, cannot fail to be preserved by me and my posterity as a most precious monument;

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The King of Prussia, to whose interest this augmentation of power would have been dangerous, has crowned an illustrious reign by displaying all the resources of military genius and profound policy in opposition to it. While he contended in the field, France negotiated, and the work begun by his arms was completed by the Cabinet of Versailles.

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By the papers enclosed with this, Congress will perceive the discontented and tumultuous state of the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, which is so great and so rapidly increasing that the United States will have little to fear from reinforcements of their enemies the ensuing campaign. All their forces will be necessary to keep in order their own riotous populace, and to replace those which are daily consuming in the West Indies. There is, however, no prospect of their evacuating either New York or Rhode Island. The possession of those places is so indispensable for the preservation of their West India and other trade, as well as of their other dominions in America, that nothing but the last necessity will induce them to give them up.

The greatest source of danger and unhappiness to the States then probably will be a depreciating currency. The prospect of a loan in Europe, after every measure that has been or could be taken, I think it my duty to say frankly to Congress, is very unpromising. The causes of this are very obvious, and cannot be removed; the state of our country itself, and the course of exchange would be sufficient to discourage such a loan, if there were no other obstruction, but there are many others. There are more borrowers in Europe than lenders; and the British loan itself will not be made this year at a less interest than seven and a half per cent.

I see no hope of relief but from economy and taxation; and those I flatter myself will be found sufficient, if the people are at once convinced of the necessity of them. When a people are contending not only for the greatest object that any people ever had in view, but for security from the greatest evil that any nation ever had to dread, (for there is at this hour no medium between unlimited subjugation to Parliament and entire sovereignty,) they must be destitute of sense as well as of virtue, if they are not willing to pay sufficient sums annually to defray the necessary expense of their defence in future, supported as they are by so powerful an ally, and by the prospect of others, against a kingdom already exhausted, without any ally at all, or a possibility of obtaining one. As this is the first time I have had the honor to address myself to Congress since we received the news of your Excellency's appointment to the chair, you will please to accept of my congratulations on that event.

I have the honor to be, with the highest esteem, &c.,

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M. DE LA FAYETTE TO JOHN ADAMS.

## Translation.

St. Germain, April 9th, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I beg leave to apply to you, in an instance where I am much concerned. The case I shall lay before you, and recommend to your care. There is an officer in Paris, whom I wish to send over to America on board the Alliance, and who I know would be of service in the American Army. For that reason, besides his recommendations, I have a great regard for him. I wish the gentleman may find a passage in the frigate. Dr. Franklin cannot officially send an officer, but I beg you would take him along with you, as I take upon myself the charge of presenting him to Congress. All the marks of kindness I ever met with from them, and the knowledge which the strictest friendship has given me of General Washington's sentiments, make me as certain as possible that my officer will meet with the best reception in Philadelphia and in the army, who know I am acquainted with what may be convenient to them.

It is with a great concern that I hear of discontents between Captain Landais and his officers, and I flatter myself that you will again establish harmony and concord among them. I will take the opportunity of this frigate to write over to my friends in America.

The articles alluded to in your letter from Passy I have been very busy about, but I did not meet with great success till now, and what is done is not equal to what I could wish. It is true, our circumstances are rather narrow at this moment; and I believe that the Ministers are willing to do what they think possible, or advantageous, but we do not always agree in opinion. I hope, however, America will have more and more occasions of knowing the true attachment of this nation for her.

With great impatience I wait for your answer, that I may send the officer to Nantes. I hope you will not refuse your patronage on this occasion, and I may answer Congress will have no objection to take a gentleman whom I send them. You will, my dear sir, in settling his passage, much oblige your humble servant,

LA FAYETTE.

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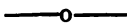
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extraordinary occasion ; and from regard to my own reputation, I am very glad you have given me an opportunity of furnishing you with evidence that I did this part of my duty so far forth. The letter was written, sent to Versailles, and received by his Excellency before the arrival of the Marquis de la Fayette, his Aid-de-Camp, or Dr. Winship ; that is, before the news reached Passy of the new arrangement.\* But lest that letter should not be sufficient, I shall enclose another certificate, not without a heartfelt grief, that malice should have been so daring and so barbarous, as to make such a letter or such a certificate from me either necessary or even pardonable.† Your hint that I must correct some things that are amiss, extorts from me an involuntary sigh. I shall be in a situation critical and difficult without example, my own character at stake from various quarters, and without anything to support me but truth and innocence ; and you need not be informed that these are not always sufficient. I have little expectation of doing good ; God grant I may do no harm. I shall not designedly. But I suppose Congress intend to examine me as a witness, and I must tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as far as I know it. If the task should end here, I should not be much embarrassed ; but if they should proceed to demand of me opinions and judgments of men and things, as there is reason to expect they will, although I hope they will not, what will be the consequences ? Upon the whole, truth must be my shield, and if the shafts of interested malice can pierce through this, they shall pierce me.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Braintree, August 3d, 1779.

Sir,

On the 27th of February, I had the honor of writing to Congress, informing them of my intention of returning home, in consequence of the commission which superseded mine. On the first of March, I

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\* See this letter in Arthur Lee's Correspondence, vol. I., p. 542.

† See as above, p. 560.



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I have entered into this detail of disappointments to justify myself for not returning sooner, and to show that it was not my fault that I was not at home in eight weeks from the first authentic information that I had nothing further to do in France. There is nothing remaining for me to do but settle my accounts with Congress; but as part of my accounts are in conjunction with my late colleagues, with whom I lived in the same house during my residence in Paris, I am not able to judge whether Congress will choose to receive my accounts, or to wait until the other Commissioners shall exhibit theirs, and have the whole together, under one view, so as to do equal justice to all. I am ready, however, to render all the account in my power, either jointly or separately, whenever Congress shall order it, and I shall wait their directions accordingly.

It is not in my power, having been so long from Paris, to give Congress any news of importance, except that the Brest fleet, under the Count d'Orvilliers, was at sea the beginning of June; that Admiral Arbuthnot was at Plymouth the 31st of May; and that there was a universal persuasion, arising from letters from Paris and London, that Spain had decided against the English. The Chevalier de la Luzerne will be able to give Congress satisfactory information upon this head.

I ought not to conclude this letter without expressing my obligations to Captain Chavagne, and the other officers of the *Sensible*, for their civilities in the course of my passage home, and the pleasure I have had in the conversation of his Excellency, the new Plenipotentiary from our august ally, and the Secretary to the embassy, Monsieur Marbois.

The Chevalier de la Luzerne is a Knight of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, of an ancient and noble family, connected by blood with many characters of principal name in the Kingdom, a grandson of the celebrated Chancellor de la Moignon, a nephew of Monsieur Malesherbes, perhaps still more famous as first President of the Court of Aids and as Minister of State, a brother to the Count de la Luzerne, and of the Bishop of Sangres, one of the three Dukes and Peers who had the honor to assist in the consecration of the King, a near relation of the Maréchal de Broglie and the Count his brother, and of many other important personages in that country. Nor is his personal character less respectable than his connexions, as he is possessed of much useful information of all kinds, and particularly

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jealousies and efforts to reduce it. Thus when Spain, under Charles the Fifth and his successor, made herself dangerous, a great part of Europe united against her, assisted in severing the United Provinces from her, and by degrees greatly diminished her power. Thus when France, under Lewis the Fourteenth, indulged the spirit of conquest too far, a great part of mankind united their forces against her, with such success as to involve her in a train of misfortunes, out of which she never emerged before the present reign. The English, in their turn, by means of their commerce and extensive settlements abroad, arose to a degree of opulence and naval power, which excited more extravagant passions in her own breast, and more tyrannical exertions of her influence than appeared in either of the other cases. The consequence has been similar, but more remarkable. Europe seems to be more universally and sincerely united in the desire of reducing her, than they ever were in any former instance. This is the true cause why the French Court never made war with so universal a popularity among their own subjects, so general an approbation of other Courts, and such unanimous wishes among all nations for her success, as at this time.

The personal character of the King, his declared patronage of morals and economy, and the great strokes of wisdom which have marked the commencement of his reign, the active spring which has been given to commerce by the division of the British empire, and our new connexions with his subjects ; all these causes, together with the two treaties of peace, which have been lately signed under his auspices and his mediation, having given to this Power reputation, which the last reign had lost.

The first of these treaties has determined those controversies which had for a long time divided Russia and the Porte, and the parties have been equally satisfied with the conditions of their reconciliation, a circumstance the more honorable for the French Ministry, and the Chevalier de St. Priest, their Ambassador at Constantinople, as it is uncommon. The ancient confidence of the Porte in the Court of Versailles has revived, and the coolness, or rather enmity, which divided France and Russia for near twenty years, gives place to a friendship which is at this time in all its fervor, and will probably be durable, as these Powers have no interest to annoy each other, but on the contrary, are able to assist each other in a manner the most essential.

The peace of Germany, signed at Teschin the 13th of last May, has not equally satisfied the belligerent Powers, who were on the one part the Emperor, and on the other the King of Prussia and the Elector of Saxony, his ally.

From the multitude of writings which have appeared before and during this war, in which the causes, the motives, and the rights of it are discussed, it appears that in 1768, at the extinction of one of the branches of the House of Bavaria, which has been separated from its trunk for near five centuries, the House of Austria thought itself able, and priests and lawyers among their own subjects were complaisant enough to tell her that she had a right, to put herself in possession of the best part of the patrimony of the extinguished line.

The King of Prussia, to whose interest this augmentation of power would have been dangerous, has crowned an illustrious reign by displaying all the resources of military genius and profound policy in opposition to it. While he contended in the field, France negotiated, and the work begun by his arms was completed by the Cabinet of Versailles.

The Palatine House of Bavaria, the Duke of Deux Ponts, and particularly the Elector of Saxony, have obtained all they could reasonably demand, and the empire has preserved its balance of power in spite of its head. The King of Prussia had covered himself with glory, to which he put the finishing stroke by not demanding any compensation for the expenses of the war. All parties have been satisfied except the Emperor, who has disordered his finances, ruined his Kingdom of Bohemia with immense fines, has not obtained any advantage over his adversary, and consequently has destroyed among his own troops the opinion they had of their own superiority, and in fine, has sustained a loss the most sensible for a young prince just beginning to reign, the reputation of justice and moderation. It is the influence, the address, and ability of the French Minister, joined to the firmness of Russia, which have completed this work; and Lewis the Sixteenth has restored in Germany, to the nation over which he reigns, that reputation which his grandfather had lost.

The merit of the Chevalier de la Luzerne, who was Ambassador in Bavaria during the transaction of this business, and that of M. Marbois, the Secretary to that embassy, in accomplishing an affair of such importance, which was rendered peculiarly delicate by the late

family connexion between the Courts of Vienna and Versailles, was probably a motive for sending them now to America, a mission of no less importance and no less delicacy.

\* It is not probable, however, that they could have succeeded so soon, if England could have afforded subsidies to the Emperor. The Revolution in America, in which the French King has taken an earlier and a greater part than any other sovereign in Europe, has operated so as to conciliate to him a consideration that is universal. The new Minister will give to Congress information the most precise in this respect, and touching the part which Spain is taking at this time, for which reason I shall refrain from entering into it, and content myself with observing, that all these considerations ought to induce us to cherish the alliance of France ; and that every good citizen of the United States ought to endeavor to destroy the remains of those prejudices, which our ancient rulers have endeavored to inspire us with ; that we have nothing to fear and much to hope from France, while we conduct ourselves with good sense and firmness, and that we cannot take too much pains to multiply the commercial relations, and strengthen the political connexions between the two nations ; provided always, that we preserve prudence and resolution enough to receive implicitly no advice whatever, but to judge always for ourselves, and to guard ourselves against those principles in government, and those manners, which are so opposite to our own Constitution, and to our own characters, as a young people, called by Providence to the most honorable and important of all duties, that of forming establishments for a great nation and a new world.

In the opinion of some, the Power with which we shall one day have a relation the most immediate, next to that of France, is Great Britain. But it ought to be considered that this Power loses every day her consideration, and runs towards her ruin. Her riches, in which her power consisted, she has lost with us, and never can regain. With us she has lost her Mediterranean trade, her African trade, her German and Holland trade, her ally Portugal, her ally Russia, and her natural ally the House of Austria ; at least, as being unable to protect these as she once did, she can obtain no succor from them. In short, one branch of commerce has been lopped off after another, and one political interest sacrificed after another. She resembles the melancholy spectacle of a great, wide-spreading tree, that has been girdled at the root. Her endeavors to regain these

advantages will continually keep alive in her breast the most malevolent passions towards us. Her envy, her jealousy, and resentment, will never leave us, while we are what we must unavoidably be, her rivals in the fisheries, in various other branches of commerce, and even in naval power. If peace should unhappily be made, leaving Canada, Nova Scotia, or the Floridas, or any of them, in her hands, jealousies and controversies will be perpetually arising. The degree, therefore, of intercourse with this nation, which will ever again take place, may justly be considered as problematical, or rather the probability is, that it will never be so great as some persons imagine; moreover, I think that every citizen in the present circumstances, who respects his country, and the engagements she has taken, ought to abstain from the foresight of a return of friendship between us and the English, and act as if it never was to be.

But it is lawful to consider that which will probably be formed between the Hollanders and us. The similitude of manners, of religion, and in some respects of constitution, the analogy between the means by which the two republics arrived at independency, but above all the attractions of commercial interest, will infallibly draw them together. This connexion will not probably show itself, before a peace or near a prospect of peace. Too many motives of fear or interest place the Hollanders in a dependence on England, to suffer her to connect herself openly with us at present. Nevertheless, if the King of Prussia could be induced to take us by the hand, his great influence in the United Provinces might contribute greatly to conciliate their friendship for us. Loans of money, and the operations of commercial agents or societies, will be the first threads of our connexions with this Power. From the essays and enquiries of your Commissioners at Paris it appears, that some money may be borrowed there, and from the success of several enterprises by the way of St. Eustasia, it seems that the trade between the two countries is likely to increase, and possibly Congress may think it expedient to send a Minister there. If they should, it will be proper to give him a discretionary power to produce his commission or not, as he shall find it likely to succeed, to give him full powers and clear instructions concerning the borrowing of money; and the man himself above all should have a consummate prudence, and a caution and discretion, that will be proof against every trial.

If Congress could find any means of paying the interest annually

in Europe, commercial and pecuniary connexions would strengthen themselves from day to day, and if the fall of the credit of England should terminate in bankruptcy, the Seven United Provinces having nothing to dissemble, would be zealous for a part of those rich benefits which our commerce offers to the maritime Powers, and by an early treaty with us secure those advantages, from which they have already discovered strong symptoms of a fear of being excluded by delays. It is scarcely necessary to observe to Congress, that Holland had lost her influence in Europe to such a degree that there is little other regard for her remaining but that of a prodigal heir for a rich usurer, who lends him money at a high interest. The State which is poor and in debt has no political stability. Their army is very small, and their navy is less. The immense riches of individuals may possibly be in some future time the great misfortune of the nation, because the means of defence are not proportioned to the temptation which is held out for some necessitous, avaricious, and formidable neighbor to invade her.

The active commerce of Spain is very inconsiderable; of her passive commerce, we shall not fail to have a part; the vicinity of this Power, her forces, her resources, ought to make us attentive to her conduct; but if we may judge of the future by the past, I should hope we had nothing to fear from it. The genius and interest of the nation incline it to repose. She cannot determine upon a war but in the last extremity, and even then she sighs for peace. She is not possessed of the spirit of conquest, and we have reason to congratulate ourselves that we have her for the nearest and principal neighbor. Her conduct towards us at this time will perhaps appear equivocal and indecisive; her determinations appear to be solely the fruit of the negotiations of the Court of Versailles. But it ought to be considered, she has not had motives so pressing as those of France to take in hand our defence. Whether she has an eye upon the Floridas, or what other terms she may expect from Congress, they are no doubt better informed than I am. To their wisdom it must be submitted to give her satisfaction, if her terms are moderate, and her offers in proportion. This conduct may conciliate her affection and shorten delays, a point of great importance, as the present moment appears to be decisive.

Portugal under the administration of the Marquis de Pombal, broke some of the shackles by which she was held to England. But



the treaty by which a permanent friendship is established between the Crowns of Spain and Portugal, was made in 1777, an event that the English deplore as the greatest evil, next to their recoverable loss of the colonies, arising from this war, because they will now no longer be able to play off Portugal against Spain, in order to draw away her attention as well as her forces, as in former times. But as Portugal has not known how to deliver herself entirely from the influence of England, we shall have little to hope from her; on the other hand, such is her internal weakness that we have absolutely nothing to fear. We shall necessarily have commerce with her, but whether she will ever have the courage to sacrifice the friendship of England for the sake of it, is uncertain.

It would be useless to consider that infinite number of little sovereignties into which Germany is divided, and develop all their political interests. This task is as much beyond my knowledge as it would be useless to Congress. They will have few relations friendly or hostile with this country, excepting in two branches of commerce, that of merchandise and that of soldiers. The latter, infamous and detestable as it is, has been established between a nation, once generous, humane and brave, and certain princes, as avaricious of money as they are prodigal of the blood of their subjects; and such is the scarcity of cash, and the avidity for it in Germany, and so little are the rights of humanity understood and respected, that sellers will probably be found as long as buyers. America will never be found in either class. The State of Germany, with which we may have commerce of an honorable kind, is the House of Austria, one of the most powerful in Europe. She possesses very few countries, however, near the sea. Ostend is the principal city, where she might have established a trade of some consequence, if the jealousy of the maritime Powers had not constantly opposed it. France, Spain, Holland, and England, have been all agreed in their opposition, and the treaty of Utrecht, ratified more than once by subsequent treaties, has so shackled this port, that it will be impossible to open a direct trade to it, without some new treaty, which possibly may not be very distant. England may possibly make a new treaty with Austria, and agree to privileges for this port, in order to draw away the advantages of the American trade from France and Spain; and in such a treaty Holland may possibly acquiesce, if not accede to it. The port of Trieste enjoys liberty without limits, and the Court of

Vienna is anxious to make its commerce flourish. Situated as it is at the bottom of the Gulf of Trieste, the remotest part of the Gulf of Venice, tedious and difficult as the navigation of those seas is, we could make little use of it at any time, and none at all while this war continues.

This Court would seize with eagerness the advantages that are presented to her by the independence of America, but an interest more powerful restrains her; and although she is certainly attentive to this revolution, there is reason to believe she will be one of the last Powers to acknowledge our independence. She is so far from being rich, that she is destitute of the means of making war without subsidies, as is proved by the peace which has lately been made. She has occasion for the succors of France or of England to put in motion her numerous armies. She conceives easily, that the loss of the resources and credit of the English has disabled them to pay the enormous subsidies which, in former times, they have poured into the Austrian coffers. She sees therefore with a secret mortification, that she shall be hereafter more at the mercy of France, who may choose her ally, and prefer at her pleasure either Austria or Prussia, while neither Vienna nor Berlin will be able, as in times past, to choose between Paris and London, since the latter has lost her past opulence and pecuniary resources. It is our duty to remark these great changes in the system of mankind, which have already happened in consequence of the American war. The alienation of Portugal from England, the peace of Germany, and that between Petersburg and Constantinople, by all which events England has lost, and France gained, such a superiority of influence and power, are owing entirely to the blind division of that policy and wealth, which the English might have still enjoyed, from the objects of their true interests and honor, to the ruinous American war.

The Court of Berlin flatters itself that the connexions which have heretofore so long united France and Prussia will renew themselves sooner or later. This system is more rational than that which subsists at this day. The King of Prussia may then wait without anxiety the consequences of the present revolution, because it tends to increase the resources of his natural ally. The jealousy between the Emperor and the King of Prussia, and that between the Houses of Bourbon and Austria, are a natural tie between France and Prussia. The rivalry between France and Great Britain is another

motive, too natural and too permanent for the former to suffer the King of Prussia to be long the ally of the latter. One of the favorite projects of Prussia—that of rendering the port of Emden a place of flourishing trade—interests him most powerfully in our independence. Silesia, one of his best provinces, has already felt the influence of it; and sensible of the force that empires derive from commerce, he is earnestly desirous to see it introduced between America and his States; which gives ground to believe that as Austria will be one of the last, so Prussia will be one of the first to acknowledge our independence; an opinion which is rendered more propable by the answer which was given by the Baron de Schulenburg to Mr. Arthur Lee, and the influence of the King of Prussia in the United Provinces, which is greater than that of any other Power, arising from his great military force, and the vicinity of his dominions. His near relation to the Stadtholder and the Prince of Brunswick, is an additional motive to cultivate his friendship. The Electorate of Saxony, with a fruitful soil, contains a numerous and industrious people, and most of the commerce between the east and the west of Europe passes through it. The fairs of Leipsic have drawn considerable advantages for these four years from our trade. This Power will see with pleasure the moment which shall put the last hand to our independence. The rest of Germany, excepting Hamburg and Bremen, have no means of opening a direct commerce with us; with the latter we have no connection at present; in the former all the commerce of Lower Germany is transacted; here we shall soon have occasion to establish an agent or consul.

Poland, depopulated by the war and a vicious government, reduced by a shameful treaty to two-thirds of her ancient dominion, destitute of industry and manufactures, even of the first necessity, has no occasion for the productions of America. Dantzic sees her ancient prosperity diminish every day. There is, therefore, little probability of commerce, and less of any political connection between that nation and us.

Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, comprehended under the denomination of the northern Powers, have been thought by some to be interested in our return to the domination of Great Britain. Whether they consider themselves in this light or not, their late declarations against the right of England to interrupt their navigation, and their arming for the protection of their commerce on the ocean, and even

in the English channel, are unequivocal proofs of their opinion concerning the right in our contest, and of their intentions not to interfere against us. It is very true, that the articles of commerce which they produce are in many respects the same with those of America. Yet if we consider that we shall have occasion to purchase from them large quantities of hemp and sail-cloth, and that our productions of timber, pitch, tar, and turpentine, are less profitable with us without bounties, than some other branches of labor, it is not probable that we shall lower the price of these articles in Europe so much as some conjecture, and consequently our increased demand upon those countries for several articles will be more than a compensation to them for the small loss they may sustain, by a trifling reduction in the price of those articles. It is not probable that the Courts of Petersburgh, Stockholm, and Copenhagen, have viewed with indifference the present revolution, if they have been apprehensive of being hurt by it in some respects, which however I think must have been a mistaken apprehension; yet the motive of humbling the pride of the English, who have endeavored to exercise their domination, even over the northern seas, and to render the Danish and Swedish flag dependent upon theirs, has prevailed over all others, and they are considered in Europe as having given their testimony against the English in this war.

Italy, a country which declines every day from its ancient prosperity, offers few objects to our speculations. The privileges of the port of Leghorn, nevertheless, may render it useful to our ships, when our independence shall be acknowledged by Great Britain, if, as we once flattered ourselves, the Court of Vienna might receive an American Minister. We were equally in error respecting the Court of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, where an Austrian prince reigns, who receives all his directions from Vienna, in such a manner that he will probably never receive any person in a public character, until the chief of his house has set him the example. The King of the two Sicilies is in the same dependence on the Court of Madrid, and we may depend upon it, he will conform himself to all it shall suggest to him. This prince has already ordered the ports of his dominions to be open to American vessels, public and private, and has ordered his Ambassador at Paris to apply to your Commissioners for a description of the American flag, that our vessels might be known, and receive no molestation upon their appearance in his harbors.

The Court of Rome attached to ancient customs, would be one of the last to acknowledge our independence, if we were to solicit for it. But Congress will probably never send a Minister to his Holiness, who can do them no service, upon condition of receiving a Catholic Legate or Nuncio in return, or in other words, an ecclesiastical tyrant, which it is to be hoped the United States will be too wise ever to admit into their territories.

The States of the King of Sardinia are poor, and their commerce is very small. The little port of Villa Franca will probably see few American vessels, nor will there be any close relations, either commercial or political, between this prince and us.

The Republic of Genoa is scarcely known at this day in Europe but by those Powers who borrow money. It is possible that some small sums might be obtained there, if Congress would fall upon means of insuring a punctual payment of interest in Europe.

Venice, heretofore so powerful, is reduced to a very inconsiderable commerce, and is in an entire state of decay.

Switzerland is another lender of money, but neither her position nor her commerce can occasion any near relation with us.

Whether there is any thing in these remarks worth the trouble of reading I shall submit to the wisdom of Congress; and subscribe myself, with the highest consideration, your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

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TO JAMES LOVELL.

Braintree, August 13th, 1779.

My dear Sir,

Since I have had opportunity to converse a little in this country, and to read a few gazettes, I find that questions have been agitated here in the newspapers, and in private circles, as well as in Congress, concerning his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, and Mr. Arthur Lee, which seem to make it necessary that I should send the enclosed copies.\* You can judge better than I whether it will be of any public utility to lay them before Congress. My first letter, and his Excellency's answer, I can see no objection to laying before Congress;

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\* See these letters in Arthur Lee's Correspondence, vol. 1., pp. 542, 544.

but as the rest\* contain little else besides mutual compliments, perhaps it will be as well to conceal them. I submit the whole, however, to your discretion, and am with much esteem, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Braintree, September 10th, 1779.

Sir,

Looking over the printed journals of the 15th of last April, I find in the report of the Committee appointed to take into consideration the foreign affairs of the United States, and also the conduct of the late and present Commissioners of these States, the two following articles :

1. "That it appears to them that Dr. Franklin is Plenipotentiary for these States at the Court of France ; Dr. Arthur Lee, Commissioner for the Court of Spain ; Mr. William Lee, Commissioner for the Courts of Vienna and Berlin ; Mr. Ralph Izard, Commissioner for the Court of Tuscany ; that Mr. John Adams was appointed one of the Commissioners at the Court of France, in the place of Mr. Deane, who had been appointed a joint Commissioner with Dr. Franklin and Dr. Arthur Lee, but that the said commission of Mr. Adams is superseded by the plenipotentiary commission to Dr. Franklin:

2. "That in the course of their examination and inquiry, they find many complaints against the said Commissioners, and the political and commercial agency of Mr. Deane, which complaints, with the evidence in support thereof, are herewith delivered, and to which the Committee beg leave to refer."

The word "said" in the second article, refers to the Commissioners mentioned in the first ; and as my name is among them, I learn from hence that there were some complaints against me, and that the evidence in support of them was delivered to Congress by the Committee.

I therefore pray that I may be favored with copies of those complaints, evidences, and the names of my accusers, and the

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\* See the present volume, under the dates of February 16th, 1779, p. 576; February 21st, p. 579; February 27th, p. 580.

witnesses against me, that I may take such measures as may be in my power to justify myself to Congress.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Boston, September 23d, 1779.

Sir,

I had yesterday the honor of your letter of the 7th of this month. I thank you, sir, for your obliging congratulations on my return to my family and country.

The reason why my letters of the 27th of February and the 1st of March arrived so late was, that they were delivered at the time of their dates to gentlemen then bound to the sea-ports, who expected to sail directly for America, but were disappointed of passages, until the vessels sailed under the convoy of the *Sensible*.

I have not my letter-book here, but I do not remember that they contained any thing of much consequence; so that I suppose the inconvenience of their late arrival was not much.

You will be pleased to make my most respectful compliments to the members of Congress, and believe me, with great esteem, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Braintree, October 17th, 1779.

My dear Sir,

What shall I say to your favors of the 27th and 28th of September, which came by the last post? The unanimity of my election surprises me, as much as the delicacy, importance, and danger of the trust distress me. The appointment of Mr. Dana to be Secretary pleases more than my own to be Minister, Commissioner, Negotiator, call it what you will. I have communicated to him your letters in confidence, and all other material intelligence I had, and hope he will not decline; but you know the peculiarities of his situation, and if he should refuse, I hope you will not force your name out of nomination again. I did not suppose that such characters would be willing to go as Secretaries, because I did not know your plan;

otherwise I should not have mentioned Mr. Jennings to Mr. Gerry for one to Dr. Franklin. Your mastery of the language, and your indefatigability would make you infinitely useful in any of these departments.

I rejoice that you produced my letter to the Count de Vergennes, and his answer before the choice, because it contained a testimony in favor of Mr. Lee, which was his due.\* I am very much affected at his recall, because I know his merit, and, therefore, I am glad I was not placed in his stead, for suspicions would have arisen and reflections would have been cast upon me, as having favored his removal in order to make room, which I certainly did not. I am infinitely obliged to you for those letters, and for that received post before last, but I really tremble for your health. Let me entreat you, for the sake of our country, to take care of it. If I was to apply myself as you do, I should soon go to study politics in another sphere. Yet I am so selfish as to beg the continuance of your favors to me, and I pledge myself to you I will not be in debt any more than may be made by the intrinsic difference in the value of the letters, which will be unavoidable.

I thank you for the extract from Mr. Izard's letter. I am not a little surprised at its contents. It was written, I see, to his friend, and I suppose intended in confidence. I am fully persuaded he did not intend that the whole should have been laid before Congress.† I utterly deny that I ever used to him any such language as the indecent paragraph that closes what he says about me. Indeed, that is manifestly his own inference, and in his own words, from what he says he had heard me say, and he draws the same from what Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane had said upon the same subject. I further deny that I ever *threatened* him with the displeasure of Congress for writing his opinion concerning these articles to Congress, or for suggesting them to the Commissioners. But to enter into all the conversations that have passed between Mr. Izard and me respecting those articles, and many other points, in order to give a full and fair representation of those conversations, would fill a small volume. Yet there never was any angry or rude conversation between him and me, that I can recollect. I lived with him on good terms, visited

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\* See these letters in Arthur Lee's Correspondence, vol. 1., pp. 542, 544.

† See Izard's Correspondence, vol. 1., p. 694.

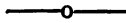


him and he me, dined with his family, and his family with me, and I ever told him, and repeated it often, that I should always be obliged to him for his advice, opinions, and sentiments upon any American subject, and that I should always give it its due weight, although I did not think myself bound to follow it any further than it seemed to me to be just. As Congress have declined giving me the charges against me by their authority, and have upon the whole acquitted me with so much splendor, it would look like a littleness of soul in me to make myself anxious, or give them any further trouble about it. And as I have in general so good an opinion of Mr. Izard's attachment to his country, and of his honor, I shall not think myself bound to take any further notice of this fruit of his inexperience in public life, this peevish ebullition of the rashness of his temper. I have written a few other observations to Mr. Gerry on the same subject. You and he will compare these with them for your private satisfaction, but be sure that they are not exposed where they will do harm to the public, to Mr. Izard, or me, unnecessarily.

If I should go abroad, cannot you lend me twenty or thirty complete sets of the journals? They are much wanted in Europe. A set of them is a genteel present, and perhaps would do me and the public more service than you are aware of. If Congress or some committee would order it, I should be very glad.

I am, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Braintree, October 19th, 1779.

Sir,

I had in Paris an opportunity of procuring information concerning the British whale fishery on the coast of Brazil, which it is proper to communicate to Congress, that if any advantage can be made of it the opportunity may not be lost.

The last year and the year before the English carried on this fishery to a very great advantage, off the river Plate in South America, in the latitude of 35° south, and from thence to 40°, just on the edge of soundings, off and on, as the sailors express it, and about longitude 65° from London. They had about seventeen vessels in this fishery, which all sailed from London in the months of September and October; all the officers and men Americans from

Nantucket and Cape Cod, two or three from Rhode Island, and one from Long Island. Four or five of these vessels went to Greenland, to which place they sail yearly, the last of February, or the beginning of March.

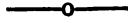
The year before last there was published in the English newspapers a letter from the Lords of the Admiralty to Dennis de Bredt, in Coleman street, informing him that a convoy should be appointed to the Brazil fleet; but this I had certain information was a forgery, calculated merely to deceive American privateers, and no convoy actually went or was appointed, either last year or the year before, although the imposture was repeated both times, and will no doubt be renewed this.

For the capture or destruction of a fishery so wholly defenceless, not one of the vessels having any arms, a single frigate, or indeed a privateer of four and twenty guns, would be sufficient. The beginning of December would be the best time to proceed from Boston or Philadelphia, because the frigate would then find the whaling vessels nearly loaded. The cargoes of bone and oil are very valuable, and at least four hundred and fifty of the best kind of seamen would be taken out of the hands of the English, and might be gained into the American service. Most of the officers and men wish well to this country, and would gladly be in its service, if they could be delivered from that they are engaged in. Whenever the English men-of-war or privateers have taken an American vessel, they have given to all the whalers found among the crew, by order of Government, their choice, either to go on board a man-of-war and fight against their country, or into the whale fishery. Such numbers have chosen the latter as have made the crews of seventeen vessels.

I thought it my duty to communicate this, that if so profitable a branch of commerce and so valuable a nursery of seamen can be taken from the English, it may be done. I prevailed with my colleagues last year to represent these facts to his Excellency M. de Sartine, but it appears that his Majesty's service would not admit of any enterprise from France in consequence of it. Since my return I have represented them to the Council of this State, but whether any thing can be done by them after the disaster at Penobscot, I doubt. If Congress should not deem it consistent with the public service to send a frigate upon this service, nothing will be lost but the trouble of this letter.

I have the honor to congratulate your Excellency on your advancement to the chair, and to subscribe myself with great respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

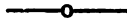
Braintree, October 20th, 1779.

Sir,

M. Schweighauser, of Nantes, who is a native of Switzerland, observing me as I was one day at his house looking with some attention upon a stamp of the heroic deed of William Tell, asked me to take a few of them to America, as a present from him, which I agreed to do with pleasure. He accordingly sent on board the frigate a box, containing, as he told me, one stamp for each State, neatly framed and glazed, which he desired me to present to Congress, as a small token of his respect. The box has never been opened, but I hope the pictures are safe; and with permission of Congress I will deliver it to the Navy Board in Boston, to be by them transmitted to the delegates from the several States, or to their order.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Braintree, October 21st, 1779.

Sir,

So many advantages might be derived to the United States in the conduct of the war, in furnishing the army and navy, in augmenting the value, or at least in preventing the further depreciation of their currency, in lowering the prices of goods, in supplying the wants of the people, and in preventing murmurs and discontents, that I have ever thought it of very great importance, in some way or other, to procure convoys to their trade to and from the West India Islands and Europe.

France and Spain have such advantages of England in carrying on the war in the American seas, and would receive such assistance from our commerce, privateers, and growing navy, that I have ever

thought it a main principle of their policy to maintain a constant and decided superiority of naval power in the West Indies, and upon the coasts of this continent. I would, therefore, with due deference to the superior wisdom of Congress, beg leave to submit to their consideration, whether it would not be expedient for them, either by a direct representation from themselves to the French and Spanish Courts, or by instructions to their Plenipotentiary Ministers, to convince those Courts that their true interest lies in adopting this plan. It is certainly their interest, reasoning upon French and Spanish principles simply, to conduct this war in such a manner as has a tendency in the shortest time, and with the least expense, to diminish the power of their enemies and increase their own. Now I would submit it to Congress whether it may not be easily demonstrated, that these ends may be obtained the most easily in this way. A representation from Congress, either directly or by instructions to their Ministers, showing what assistance in provisions, artists, materials, vessels of war, privateers, land armies, or in any other way, France and Spain might depend upon receiving from these States, either for money or as the exertions of an ally, would have great weight.

Much has already been said to the French Ministry upon these subjects, and not wholly without effect; yet much more may be said to greater advantage, and perhaps to better purpose, for they are extremely well disposed to do what can be made to appear to them for the advantage of the common cause.

I have the honor to enclose some papers on this subject. One is a letter from the Commissioners to his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, which he received the beginning of January last;\* the other is a letter from me to the Marquis de la Fayette† in February, with his answer.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

—○—  
TO HENRY LAURENS.

Braintree, October 25th, 1779.

My dear Sir,

Your favor of the 4th of this month gave me great pleasure, but I

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\* See the Correspondence of the Commissioners in France, vol. 1, p. 366.

† See above, p. 216. The answer of M. de la Fayette is missing.

am afraid that you and some others of my friends felt more for me in the awkward situation you mention than I did for myself, though I cannot say that I was wholly insensible. I could compare it to nothing but Shakspeare's idea of Ariel, wedged in the middle of a rifted oak, for I was sufficiently sensible that it was owing to an unhappy division in Congress; and pains enough were taken to inform me that one side were for sending me to Spain, and the other to Holland, so that I was flattered to find that neither side had any decisive objection against trusting me, and that the apparent question was only *where*.

That I was sent without the least solicitation of mine, directly or indirectly, is certainly true; and I had such formidable ideas of the sea and of British men-of-war, such diffidence in my own qualifications to do service in that way, and such uncertainty of the reception I should meet, that I had little inclination to adventure. That I went against my interest is most undoubtedly so, for I never yet served the public without losing by it. I was not, however, as you suppose, kept unemployed. I had business enough to do, as I could easily convince you. There is a great field of business there, and I could easily show you that I did my share of it. There is so much to do, and so much difficulty to do it well, that I am rejoiced to find a gentleman of such abilities, principles, and activity as Colonel Laurens undoubtedly is, without a compliment, appointed to assist in it.\* I most sincerely hope for his friendship, and an entire harmony with him, for which reason I should be very happy in his company in the passage, or in an interview with him as soon as possible in Europe. He will be in a delicate situation, but not so much so as I was; and plain sense, honest intentions, and common civility will, I think, be sufficient to secure him, and do much good.

Your kind compliments on my safe return and most honorable recollection are very obliging. I have received no commission, nor instructions, nor any particular information of the plan; but from the advice and information from you and several other of my friends at Philadelphia and here, I shall make no hesitation to say, that

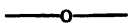
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\* This alludes to the appointment of Colonel John Laurens to be Secretary to the Minister Plenipotentiary in France. *Secret Journals*, vol. 2, p. 261. It does not appear that Colonel Laurens accepted the appointment. He was the son of Henry Laurens, to whom this letter from Mr. Adams is addressed.

notwithstanding the delicacy and danger of this commission, I suppose I shall accept it without delay, and trust events to Heaven, as I have been long used to do.

The convulsions at Philadelphia are very affecting and alarming, but not entirely unexpected to me. The state of parties, and the nature of their government, have a long time given me disagreeable apprehensions. But I hope they will find some remedy. Methods will be found to feed the army, but I know of none to clothe it without convoys to trade, which Congress I think, will do well to undertake, and persuade France and Spain to undertake as soon as possible. Your packets for your friends in Europe will give me pleasure, and shall be forwarded with care and despatch.

With great truth and regard, I am, &c., JOHN ADAMS.



## TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Braintree, November 4th, 1779.

Sir,

I had yesterday the honor of receiving your letter of the 20th of October, enclosed with two commissions, appointing me Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States to negotiate peace and commerce with Great Britain, together with instructions for my government in the execution of these commissions, copies of instructions to the Ministers Plenipotentiary at Versailles and Madrid, and two acts of Congress of the 4th and 15th of October.

Peace is an object of such vast importance, the interests to be adjusted in the negotiations to obtain it are so complicated and so delicate, and the difficulty of giving even general satisfaction is so great that I feel myself more distressed at the prospect of executing the trust, than at the thought of leaving my country, and again encountering the danger of the seas and of enemies. Yet when I reflect on the general voice in my favor, and the high honor that is done me by this appointment, I feel the warmest sentiments of gratitude to Congress, and shall make no hesitation to accept it, and devote myself without reserve or loss of time to the discharge of it. My success, however, may depend in a very great degree on the intelligence and advices that I may receive from time to time from Congress, and on the punctuality with which several articles in my instructions may be kept secret. It shall be my most earnest

endeavor to transmit to Congress the most constant and exact information in my power of whatever may occur, and to conceal those instructions which depend in any measure on my judgment. And I hope I need not suggest to Congress the necessity of communicating to me, as early as possible, their commands from time to time, and of keeping all the discretionary articles an impenetrable secret, a suggestion, however, that the constitution of that sovereignty, which I have the honor to represent, might excuse.

As the frigate has been some time waiting, I shall embark in eight or ten days at furthest. Your Excellency will please to present my most dutiful respects to Congress, and accept my thanks for the polite and obliging manner in which you have communicated their commands.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

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*Instructions for a Treaty of Peace with Great Britain.\**

Sir,

You will herewith receive a commission, giving you full power to negotiate a treaty of peace with Great Britain; in doing which you will conform to the following information and instructions:

1. The United States are sincerely desirous of peace, and wish by every means consistent with their dignity and safety to spare the further effusion of blood. They have, therefore, by your commission and these instructions labored to remove the obstacles to that event, before the enemy have evidenced their disposition for it. But as the great object of the present defensive war on the part of the allies is to establish the independence of the United States, and as any treaty whereby this end cannot be obtained must be only ostensible and illusory, you are, therefore, to make it a preliminary article to any negotiation that Great Britain shall agree to treat with the United States, as sovereign, free, and independent.

2. You shall take especial care also that the independence of the said States be effectually assured and confirmed by the treaty or

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\* These instructions, and those for a treaty of commerce which follow, were agreed to unanimously in Congress on the 14th of August, nearly six weeks before the Minister was chosen. They were drawn up by Gouverneur Morris.

treaties of peace, according to the form and effect of the treaty of alliance with his Most Christian Majesty. And you shall not agree to such treaty or treaties unless the same be thereby so assured and confirmed.

3. The boundaries of these States are as follows, viz: These States are bounded north by a line to be drawn from the northwest angle of Nova Scotia along the highlands which divide those rivers which empty themselves into the river St. Lawrence from those which fall into the Atlantic ocean, to the northwesternmost head of Connecticut river; thence down along the middle of that river to the forty-fifth degree of north latitude; thence due west in the latitude of forty-five degrees north from the equator to the northwesternmost side of the river St. Lawrence or Cadaraqui; thence straight to the south end of Nepissing; and thence straight to the source of the river Mississippi; west by a line to be drawn along the middle of the river Mississippi from its source to where the said line shall intersect the thirty-first degree of north latitude; south, by a line to be drawn due east, from the termination of the line last mentioned, in the latitude of thirty-one degrees north from the equator to the middle of the river Appalachicola, or Catahouchi; thence along the middle thereof to its junction with the Flint river; thence straight to the head of St. Mary's river; and thence down along the middle of St. Mary's river to the Atlantic ocean; and east, by a line to be drawn along the middle of St. John's river from its source to its mouth in the Bay of Fundy, comprehending all islands within twenty leagues of any part of the shores of the United States, and lying between lines to be drawn due east from the points where the aforesaid boundaries between Nova Scotia on the one part, and East Florida on the other part, shall respectively touch the Bay of Fundy and the Atlantic ocean. You are, therefore, strongly to contend that the whole of the said countries and islands lying within the boundaries aforesaid, and every citadel, fort, post, place, harbor, and road to them belonging, be absolutely evacuated by the land and sea forces of his Britannic Majesty, and yielded to the powers of the States to which they respectively belong, in such situation as they may be at the termination of the war. But notwithstanding the clear right of these States, and the importance of the object, yet they are so much influenced by the dictates of religion and humanity, and so desirous of complying with the earnest request of their allies, that if the line to be drawn from the mouth of the Lake



Nepissing to the head of the Mississippi cannot be obtained without continuing the war for that purpose, you are hereby empowered to agree to some other line between that point and the river Mississippi ; provided the same shall in no part thereof be to the southward of latitude forty-five degrees north. And in like manner, if the eastern boundary above described cannot be obtained, you are hereby empowered to agree that the same shall be afterwards adjusted by commissioners to be duly appointed for that purpose, according to such line as shall be by them settled and agreed on as the boundary between that part of the State of Massachusetts Bay, formerly called the province of Maine, and the colony of Nova Scotia, agreeably to their respective rights. And you may also consent that the enemy shall destroy such fortifications as they may have erected.

4. Although it is of the utmost importance to the peace and commerce of the United States that Canada and Nova Scotia should be ceded, and more particularly that their equal common right to the fisheries should be guaranteed to them, yet a desire of terminating the war has induced us not to make the acquisition of these objects an ultimatum on the present occasion.

5. You are empowered to agree to a cessation of hostilities during the negotiation, provided our ally shall consent to the same, and provided it shall be stipulated that all the forces of the enemy shall be immediately withdrawn from the United States.

6. In all other matters not above mentioned, you are to govern yourself by the alliance between his Most Christian Majesty and these States, by the advice of our allies, by your knowledge of our interests, and by your own discretion, in which we repose the fullest confidence.

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*Instructions for a Treaty of Commerce with Great Britain.*

Sir,

You will herewith receive a commission, giving you full power to negotiate a treaty of commerce with Great Britain ; in doing which, you will consider yourself bound by the following information and instructions :

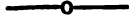
1. You will govern yourself principally by the treaty of commerce with his Most Christian Majesty ; and as, on the one hand, you shall grant no privilege to Great Britain not granted by that treaty to

France, so on the other, you shall not consent to any peculiar restrictions or limitations whatever in favor of Great Britain.

2. In order that you may be the better able to act with propriety on this occasion, it is necessary for you to know that we have determined, 1st, that the common right of fishing shall in no case be given up; 2dly, that it is essential to the welfare of all these United States that the inhabitants thereof at the expiration of the war should continue to enjoy the free and undisturbed exercise of their common right to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland, and the other fishing banks and seas of North America, preserving inviolate the treaties between France and the said States; 3dly, that application shall be made to his Most Christian Majesty to agree to some article or articles for the better securing to these States a share in the said fisheries; 4thly, that if, after a treaty of peace with Great Britain, she shall molest the citizens or inhabitants of any of the United States, in taking fish on the banks and places hereinafter described, such molestation being in our opinion a direct violation and breach of the peace, shall be a common cause of the said States, and the force of the Union be exerted to obtain redress for the parties injured; and 5thly, that our faith be pledged to the several States, that without their unanimous consent no treaty of commerce shall be entered into, nor any trade or commerce carried on with Great Britain, without the explicit stipulation hereinafter mentioned. You are therefore not to consent to any treaty of commerce with Great Britain without an explicit stipulation on her part, not to molest or disturb the inhabitants of the United States of America in taking fish on the banks of Newfoundland and other fisheries in the American seas anywhere, excepting within the distance of three leagues of the shores of the territories remaining to Great Britain at the close of the war, if a nearer distance cannot be obtained by negotiation. And in the negotiation you are to exert your most strenuous endeavors to obtain a nearer distance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and particularly along the shores of Nova Scotia, as to which latter we are desirous that even the shores may be occasionally used for the purpose of carrying on the fisheries by the inhabitants of these States.

In all matters you are to govern yourself by your own discretion, as shall be most for the interest of these States, taking care that the said treaty be founded on principles of equality and reciprocity, so

as to conduce to the mutual advantage of both nations, but not to the exclusion of others.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Braintree, November 7th, 1779.

Sir,

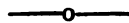
I have the honor to enclose to Congress a copy of the letter-book of the Commissioners at the Court of Versailles during the time I had the honor to be one of them. As the letter-book was kept by me, and almost wholly in my handwriting, the Minister Plenipotentiary consented that I should bring it home with me, leaving him a copy, which was done.

As there may be many things in it which Congress may have occasion to know, I have prevailed with Mr. Thaxter to copy it. I shall submit to the consideration of Congress whether he ought to have any allowance for this service, and how much. As Mr. Thaxter will accompany me to Europe, in the character of my private secretary, if Congress think proper to allow him any thing for these copies, I can pay him in Europe if it is thought proper.

I chose to mention Mr. Thaxter's going with me to Congress, because jealousies have arisen heretofore concerning private secretaries. Mr. Thaxter is known to Congress, and I think I can safely confide in his fidelity, diligence, and discretion, and from the experience I have had in Europe I am fully convinced that it is my duty to take with me some one of this character.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO B. FRANKLIN.

Ferrol, December 8th, 1779.

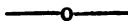
Sir,

I have the honor to inform your Excellency that Congress having judged it proper to appoint me to a new mission in Europe, I embarked on the 13th of November, at the instance of the Chevalier de la Luzerne and M. Gerard, on board the same frigate that carried me to America. Soon after we got to sea a formidable leak in the

ship discovered itself, so as to oblige us to keep two pumps constantly going by night and day, which induced the captain to think it necessary to put into this place, where we have just now cast anchor. Whether I shall go to Paris by land or wait for the frigate, is uncertain; I believe the former, as the latter might detain me four or five weeks. I have despatches for your Excellency from Congress, which I shall carry with me, and newspapers. These latter contain little remarkable save the evacuation of Rhode Island by the enemy, and the Count d'Estaing's progress in Georgia, in coöperation with General Lincoln, which was in a fair course of success.

I hope the Confederacy, which sailed from Philadelphia three or four weeks before us, with M. Gerard and Mr. Jay, who is appointed Minister Plenipotentiary for Spain, has happily arrived, and made it unnecessary for me to enlarge upon the general state of affairs in America, which were upon the whole in a favorable train. I hope to have the honor of saluting you at Passy in a few weeks, and am, with great respect, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Ferrol, December 11th, 1779.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform Congress that on the 13th of November I embarked on board the French frigate *La Sensible*, and on the 14th came on board Mr. Francis Dana, the secretary to my commission, when we fell down to King's Roads, and on the 15th we sailed for France.

A leak was soon discovered in the ship, which obliged us to ply the pumps; as it seemed a steady leak, it gave little alarm at first, but continuing to increase to such a degree as to make two pumps constantly necessary night and day, obliging the passengers to take their turns in common with the ship's people, the captain judged it necessary to make the first port he could find. Accordingly, on the 7th of December, we happily discovered Cape Finisterre, and on the 8th arrived in the magnificent Spanish port of Ferrol, where we found a squadron of French ships-of-the-line, the officers of which think we were very happy in making this port, as the frigate, since

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## TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Corunna, December 16th, 1779.

Sir,

By the opportunity of a small vessel accidentally in this harbor, bound to Newburyport, I have the honor to inform Congress that I have been detained by violent rains and several accidents in Ferrol until yesterday, when I set out with my family for this place, and arrived last evening without any accident. I awaited immediately on the Governor of the province, and on the Governor of the town, and received many civilities from both, and particularly from his Excellency the Governor of the province of Galacia, an assurance that he was not only disposed personally to render me every hospitality and assistance in his power, but that he received express orders from his Court to treat all Americans who should arrive here like their best friends. These personages were very inquisitive about American affairs, particularly the progress of our arms, and the operations of the Count d'Estaing, and more particularly still about the appointment of a Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Madrid. They requested his name, character, nativity, age, whether he was a member of Congress, and whether he had been President, with many other particulars.

To all these questions I made the best answers in my power; and with regard to his Excellency the Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Madrid, I gave them the most exact information, and such a respectable character as the high offices he has sustained, and his own personal merit require. It is the prevailing opinion here that the Court of Madrid is well disposed to enter into a treaty with the United States, and that the Minister from Congress will be immediately received, American independence acknowledged, and a treaty concluded. The frigate *La Sensible* is found to be in so bad a condition, that I am advised by every body to go to France by land. The season, the roads, the accommodations for travelling are so unfavorable, that it is not expected I can get to Paris in less than thirty days. But if I were to wait for the frigate, it would probably be much longer. I am determined, therefore, to make the best of my way by land. And it is possible that this journey may prove of some service to the public, although it will be tedious and

expensive to me—at least, I hope the public will sustain no loss by it.

There are six battalions of Irish troops in Spain, in three regiments, several of whose officers have visited me to assure me of their regard to the United States. I have been this afternoon to the Tower de Fer to see the Island of Cezarga, which was rendered famous in the course of the last summer by being appointed the rendezvous of the French and Spanish fleets. The French fleet arrived at this island on the 9th of June last, but were not joined by the Spanish fleet from Ferrol till some time in July, nor by the fleet from Cadiz till much later, so that the combined fleets were not able to sail for the English Channel until the 30th of July. To prevent a similar inconvenience another campaign, there are about twenty-five Spanish ships-of-the-line now in Brest, which are to winter there, and to be ready to sail with the French fleets the approaching summer, at the first opening of the season.

God grant them success and triumph, although no man wishes for peace more sincerely than I, or would take more pleasure, or think himself more highly honored in being instrumental in bringing it about, yet, I confess, I see no prospect or hope of it, at least before the end of another summer. America will be amused with rumors of peace, and Europe too, but the English are not yet in a temper for it.

The Court of Russia has lately changed its Ambassador at the Court of London, and some time in the month of October, M. Simolin, the new Minister Plenipotentiary from the Court of Petersburg to the Court of London, passed through France in his way to England; and resided three weeks in Paris. From this circumstance a report has been spread in Europe that the Court of Russia is about to undertake the office of mediator between the belligerent Powers. But from conversation with several persons of distinction since my arrival in Spain, particularly with the Count de Sade, the Chef d'Escadré, commanding the French men-of-war now in Ferrol, I am persuaded that if Russia has any thoughts of a mediation, the independence of the United States will be insisted upon by her as a preliminary, and Great Britain will feel much more reluctance to agree to this, than to the cession of Gibraltar, which it is said Spain absolutely insists upon.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

## TO THE GOVERNOR OF CORUNNA.

Corunna, December 18th, 1779.

Mr. Adams presents his compliments to the Governor of Corunna, and informs him according to his desire expressed last evening, that the names of the persons for whom he requests a passport from his Excellency the Governor of this province, are as follows :

John Adams, a Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America.

Francis Dana, secretary to Mr. Adams's commission, a member of Congress, and a member of the Council of Massachusetts Bay.

John Thaxter, private secretary to Mr. Adams.

John Quincy Adams, a son of Mr. Adams, about twelve years of age.

Charles Adams, another son of Mr. Adams, nearly ten years of age.

Jeremiah Allen, of Boston in Massachusetts, a private gentleman accidentally in company ; he is a merchant travelling with the view of establishing a private commerce in Spain, as well as France.

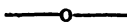
Samuel Cooper Johonnot, ten or eleven years of age, a grandson of a particular friend of Mr. Adams in Boston, going to Paris for an education in the University there.

Joseph Stevens, a servant of Mr. Adams.

John William Christian Frieke, a servant of Mr. Dana.

Andrew Desmia, a servant of M. Allen.

Mr. Adams requests a passport for all these persons to go to Madrid, and from thence to Bilboa, and from thence to Bayonne, in their way to Paris ; with liberty at the same time to go directly to Bayonne by the nearest road, without going to Madrid, or to Bilboa ; as it is uncertain whether Mr. Adams will have the time to gratify his inclination with the sight of those cities.



M. DE SARTINE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Translation.

Versailles, December 31st, 1779.

Sir,

I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 6th of October last.

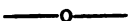


I was well persuaded that M. de Chavagne\* would endeavor to procure for you every thing in his power to render your passage agreeable. This was conformable to the instructions I had given him respecting the intentions of the King.

I learn with pleasure that being again charged with an important mission by Congress you will be able to profit by the frigate *Sensible* a second time in your voyage to France.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE SARTINE.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Bilboa, January 16th, 1780.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform Congress that last night and not before I arrived at this place.

At Ferrol and Corunna I was advised by all the friends of America to undertake a journey by land. The consul of France and M. Lagoanere, a gentleman who has acted for some time as the American agent at Corunna, obligingly offered me all the assistance in their power, and accordingly used their utmost diligence to procure me the necessary mules and carriages, for the transportation of the small number of persons in company with me, and the small quantity of baggage we found it indispensably necessary to take with us, having left more than two-thirds of what we had with us to take the chance of a passage by sea to France. From the 8th of December, when we arrived at Ferrol, to the 26th of the same month when we set off from Corunna, we were detained by the violent rains and the impossibility of getting accommodations for travelling. All our beds and provisions we were obliged to carry with us. We travelled through the ancient kingdoms of Galicia, Leon, Old Castile, and Biscay, and although we made the best of our way without loss of time, we found it impossible to go more than eight leagues a day, and sometimes not more than four. The roads and inns are inconvenient to a degree that I should blush to describe, and the pain we suffered in a cold season of the year for want of fire, in a country

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\* Captain of the frigate in which Mr. Adams returned to the United States in company with the Chevalier de la Luzerne. See above p. 587.

where there are no chimneys, gave us all such violent colds, that I was under great apprehensions of our being seized with fevers.

As we were so near Madrid, within about forty leagues, I balanced some time in my own mind whether to go to that fine city ; but considering that this would lengthen our journey near a hundred leagues, the severe season of the year, and above all the political situation I might be in, my country not being yet acknowledged as a sovereign State by any formal act of that Court, it being known that another gentleman had a commission for that Court, and he being expected soon to arrive, I thought it upon the whole the least hazardous to the public interest to avoid that route.

It may be of some use to my countrymen to transmit a few observations upon the country I have passed through, because it appears to me that a commerce extremely advantageous to both countries may be opened between us and Spain, as soon as our independence shall be acknowledged by that Power, at least as soon as we shall obtain the great object of all our wishes, peace.

The province of Galicia is one of the largest in Spain, and said to be one of the best peopled. Corunna is in effect the principal city, although St. Jago, in respect to its patron Saint, or more probably to the Archbishop who resides there, is in name the capital. This province, one of those whereof the ancient Crown of Castile was formed, is washed by the ocean for more than seventy leagues from Ribadeo, on the frontiers of Asturias, to the mouth of the river Minks, which separates it from Portugal. This coast, which is divided by Cape Finisterre, is provided on both sides of the cape with ports equally safe and convenient, which nature seems to have prepared around this cape, an object oftentimes so necessary to be made by navigators, both at their departure from Europe, and at their return, as so many asylums both from the apprehensions and the consequences of storms. The most known of these ports are, Ribadeo, Ferrol, Corunna, and Camarinas, to the eastward of Cape Finisterre ; Corubios, Muros, Pontevidia, and Vigo to the westward ; all proper to receive vessels of the first rate, especially Ferrol and Vigo ; the first, the most considerable department of the marine of Spain, is embellished with every thing that art and the treasures, profusely spent upon it for thirty years past, could add to its happy situation. Vigo, represented to be one of the most beautiful ports in the world, is

another department of the marine, more extensive and proper for such an establishment than Ferrol itself. Besides these ports there are a multitude of harbors and bays around Cape Finisterre, which afford a safe and convenient shelter to merchant vessels. With all these advantages for foreign commerce, this province has very little but what is passive. It receives from abroad some objects of daily consumption, some of luxury, some of convenience, and some even of the first necessity. At present it offers little for exportation to foreign countries. The Sardiné of its coast, the famous fish which it furnishes to all Spain, the cattle which it fattens for the provision of Madrid, and a few coarse linens which are its only manufacture, and are well esteemed, are the objects of its active commerce, and form its balance with the other provinces. The wine and the grain, the chief productions of its lands, seldom suffice for its consumption, and never go beyond it.

The liberty of commerce with the Windward Islands granted by the Court within a few years, and the particular establishment of opened the ports of that part of the new world to this province; and although without manufactures herself, or any of those productions proper for America, she renders to foreign hands the product of those which she receives from them and carries thither. In this circulation of so many treasures, she enriches herself with parts she detaches from the whole.

The civil government of this province is formed by a superior tribunal called the *Audience*, to which an appeal lies from all the subaltern jurisdictions, public and private. This Court hears, and determines, as sovereign, and without appeal, all civil affairs of a less value than a thousand ducats, or three thousand livres. Appeals in those which exceed that value are carried to the chancery of Valladolid, or to the Council of Castile. Although justice is gratis on the part of the judges, who are paid by the Government, it is said to be not less costly, tedious, and vexatious. It may not be useless to observe that the Criminal Chambers whose decrees extend to the punishment of death, and are executed without any application to the King, or any other authority, is composed only of three judges, and these three are the youngest of the whole tribunal, and this order is generally followed in Spain in the composition of the criminal tribunals, although no one pretends to conjecture the motive of so singular a reverse of the rational order of things. The administration of the

royal police belongs also to the Audience, and forms the third chamber into which this tribunal is divided.

All the military authority and the government of the troops in this department are in the hands of the Captain General of the province. There is not any one under him who has even the title of commandant. But in case of his death or absence, he is succeeded by the general officer, the most ancient in the province. To this title of Captain General is added, commonly, that of President of the Audience, a prerogative which, by uniting in his hands the civil authority to all that of his place, gives a power the most absolute and unlimited.

The inspection general, and all the economy of the affairs of the King in the province, belong to the Intendant. The different branches of the public revenue are all administered by officers appointed by the King, as in the rest of the kingdom, and there are no Farmers-General, as in France. Their product is about twenty-six millions of reals, or six millions five hundred thousand livres, the expense of collection being deducted. The expenses of the administration, including the maintenance of three regiments of infantry, scattered about in different places, do not exceed two millions five hundred thousand livres. The surplus goes into the dry-docks, arsenals, and fund of fortifications, to the support of which this sum is far from being sufficient. Such is in general the Government, military, political, and civil, of this province, and nearly all of the others except Biscay, Guipuscoa, and Alaba.

There is not in this province any particular jurisdiction of commerce, but there is a tribunal under the name of the Judge Considerator of Commerce, which takes cognizance of all their causes, civil and criminal, except the case of contaband. At this day the Judge Considerator of Strangers is the Governor of the province himself, and the appeals from his judgment are carried directly to the Council of War, which is said to be a precious privilege, by the form and brevity of procedure compared with the expensive and insupportable delays of the ordinary jurisdiction.

I cannot but think that if some measures could be taken to convince the Court that it is their interest to take off the vast duties with which commerce is overloaded in this port, fifteen per cent. being to be paid upon all commodities exported and upon all imported, and if the rigid prohibitions of tobacco could be relaxed or

repealed, several of the productions of America would find a good market here, and a commerce be opened that would put a new face upon this province, and be profitable to America too. The conveniency of such a number of excellent ports would be a vast advantage which Bilboa cannot have, as her harbor is neither safe nor convenient, besides its being so much further down the stormy, turbulent Gulf of Biscay ; yet Biscay, which is commonly used to comprehend Biscay proper, the principal city of which is Bilboa, although Ordunna is the capital ; Guipuscoa, the capital of which is St. Sebastian, and Alaba, the capital of which is Vittoria, three free provinces, whose laws the Kings of Spain have hitherto been sworn to observe inviolate, have attracted almost the whole of the American trade, because the King has no custom-house or officers here, and there are no duties to be paid.

It may seem surprising to hear of free provinces in Spain, but such is the fact, that the high and independent spirit of the people, so essentially different from the other provinces, that a traveller perceives it even in their countenances, their dress, their air, and their ordinary manner of speech, has induced the Spanish nation and her Kings to respect the ancient liberties of these people so far, that each monarch at his accession to the throne takes an oath to observe the laws of Biscay. The Government here is therefore diametrically opposite to that of Galicia, and the other provinces. The King of Spain has never assumed any higher title than Lord of Biscay. He has no troops of any sort in the lordship, nor is there any standing army, instead of which every man is obliged to serve in the militia. The King has no custom-house officers, nor other revenue officers, nor any other officers whatsoever in the lordship except a corregidor, and lately a commissary of mafine. This last is considered as an encroachment and a grievance, and the authority of the corregidor is very small, as there lies an appeal from his judgment to another tribunal, that of the two deputy generals, who are biennially elected by the people. Few of the grandees of Spain have any considerable estates here. The Duke of Medina Cœli, and the Duke of Berwick, have some lands here of no great value. The lands generally belong to the inhabitants and possessors, who hold them of no lord but the King of Spain, who is Lord of Biscay.

There is a Board of Trade here, which is annually instituted by the merchants of the place, partly by lot and partly by election,

which decides all controversies arising in trade, and all the affairs of strangers. They have never admitted any foreign consul to reside here, although it has been solicited by Holland, England, and France.

It is not at all surprising that a constitution in its nature so favorable to commerce, should have succeeded.

In travelling through the provinces of Leon and Castile, and observing the numerous flocks of sheep, with the most beautiful fleeces of wool in the world, I could not but wish that some communication might be opened by which the United States of America might be furnished with this necessary article from this country. There are few of our articles of exportation but might be sent to the Spanish market to advantage, rice, pitch, tar, turpentine, tobacco, wheat, flour, ship-timber, masts, yards, bowsprits, and salt fish might be supplied to Spain, and at an advantage, and in return she might furnish us wine, oil, fruits, some silks, some linens, perhaps, and with any quantity of wool, which is now exported to foreign countries for manufacture, and might as well be sent to us, but above all with silver and gold.

It must be the work of time and a free intercourse between the two nations, and a future negotiation to ripen these hints into a plan that may be beneficial to both. The system of revenue, which it is dangerous and difficult to alter in Spain, as well as in all other countries of Europe, will be the principal objection. I have collected together with some difficulty a few gazettes, which I have the honor to transmit to Congress, from which all the news may be collected that I have been able to learn. Congress will easily perceive the eagerness with which the belligerent Powers are bent on war, without manifesting the least disposition for peace, and most of all, Great Britain, whose ostentatious display of trifling successes, and whose weak exultation shows that nothing can divert her from her furious course. But she is exhausting and sinking her forces every day, without gaining any lasting or solid advantage, and she has reason to fear, from the combined fleets of France and Spain, under such enterprising, experienced, and approved officers, as d'Estaing and du Chaffault, the entire ruin of her commerce and navy in the course of a campaign or two more.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

## TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Paris, February 12th, 1780.

Sir,

Having obtained permission from your Excellency yesterday, when I did myself the honor to wait on you at Versailles, to write on the subject of my mission, I have now the honor to acquaint you, that on the 29th day of September last the Congress of the United States of America did me the honor to elect me their Plenipotentiary to negociate a peace with Great Britain, and also to negociate a treaty of commerce with that kingdom, and Mr. Francis Dana, member of Congress, and of the Council of Massachusetts Bay, secretary to both commissions.

As I was not at Congress when this transaction took place, I am not able to inform your Excellency very particularly of the rise and progress of it. But from conversation with gentlemen at Boston, who were members of Congress, and from private letters, I learned in general, that it was not the result of any sudden deliberation, or the fruit of any particular event of the war, prosperous or adverse, but a measure that has been more than a year under consideration, and finally agreed to on this principle, that as it was uncertain at what time the belligerent Powers might be disposed to treat of peace, which could not be concluded without a Minister from the United States, it would save a great deal of time for this Power to have a Minister in Europe fully authorised to treat, and in concert with Ministers from the other Powers at war, conclude a peace with Great Britain, and a treaty of commerce consistent with that already with his Most Christian Majesty, and such others as might be made with other Powers. I am persuaded it is the intention of my constituents and of all America, and I am sure it is my own determination, to take no steps of consequence in pursuance of my commissions, without consulting his Majesty's Ministers. And as various conjectures have been, and may be made concerning the nature of my appointment and powers, and as it may be expected by some that I should take some measures for announcing these to the public, or at least to the Court of London, I beg the favor of your Excellency's opinion and advice upon these questions :

1. Whether, in the present state of things, it is prudent in me to

acquaint the British Ministry that I am arrived here, and that I shall be ready to treat, whenever the belligerent Powers shall be inclined to treat?

2. Whether it is prudent in me to publish in any manner, more than the journals of Congress may have already done, the nature of my mission?

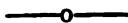
3. Or whether to remain on the reserve, as I have hitherto done since my arrival in Europe?

If any propositions should be made to me directly or indirectly from the British Ministry, I shall not fail to communicate them, without loss of time, to your Excellency, and I beg the favor of your Excellency, as I am the only person in Europe who has authority to treat of peace, that if any propositions on the part of Great Britain should be made to his Majesty's Ministers, that they may be communicated to me, at least as far as they may relate to the interest of the United States.

Although I am not confined by commissions, nor instructions, nor by any intimations from Congress to reside in any one place in Europe more than another, yet my own inclinations as well as those of the public would be most gratified, and the public service most promoted, by my residing here. I must, therefore, request his Majesty's protection and permission to reside in this kingdom for some time, with or without assuming any public character as your Excellency may think most advisable.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO M. DE SARTINE.

Paris, February 13th, 1780.

Sir,

It was not until my arrival at Passy, that I had the honor of your Excellency's letter of the 31st of December last.

When his Majesty's intentions of granting me a passage to America were communicated to me, I had little expectation of returning in the same frigate; but the Congress having honored me with a fresh mission to Europe, their Excellencies the late and present Ministers from his Majesty to the United States, concurred in a proposal to Congress, and a requisition to the commander of the frigate, to afford

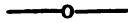


me a passage in her voyage home, which Captain Chavagne agreed to with particular marks of politeness to me and Mr. Dana, and the others who accompanied me.

I have again to express to your Excellency the obligations I am under to the captain, and all the officers of the *Sensible*, for their goodness to me and mine. But it is more particularly my duty to express again my thanks to his Majesty, for this fresh favor, to M. Gerard, and the Chevalier de la Luzerne, who procured it for me, and to your Excellency, for your approbation of it.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



COUNT DE VERGENNES TO JOHN ADAMS.

Translation.

Versailles, February 15th, 1780.

Sir,

I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 12th of this month. I think before I reply to different points on which you consult me, that it is proper to wait for the arrival of M. Gerard, because he is probably the bearer of your instructions, and will certainly be able to make me better acquainted with the nature and extent of your commission. But in the mean time, I am of opinion that it will be prudent to conceal your eventual character, and above all to take the necessary precautions, that the object of your commission may remain unknown to the Court of London. Besides, sir, you may be assured that his Majesty sees you with pleasure in his dominions, that you will constantly enjoy his protection, and the prerogatives of the law of nations. For my own part, sir, I shall be eager to give you proofs of my confidence, as well as of the sentiments with which I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, February 15th, 1780.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform Congress that on the 9th of this month,

and not before, I had the good fortune to arrive in this city, from Ferrol (where I arrived on the 8th of December) with Mr. Dana, Mr. Thaxter, and the rest of the company in tolerable health, after a journey of near five hundred leagues, in the dead of winter, through bad roads, and worse accommodations of every kind. We lost no time more than was indispensably necessary to restore our health, which was several times affected, and in great danger; yet we were more than twice as long in making the journey by land, as we had been in crossing the Atlantic ocean.

The next morning after our arrival at Paris, Mr. Dana and myself went out to Passy, and spent the day with his Excellency Dr. Franklin, who did us the honor the next day to accompany us to Versailles, where we had the honor to wait on their Excellencies the Count de Vergennes, M. de Sartine, and the Count Maurepas, with each of whom we had the honor of a short conference upon the state of public affairs. It is sufficient for me to say in general, that I never heard the French Ministry so frank, so explicit, so decided, as each of these gentlemen was in the course of this conversation, in his declarations to pursue the war with vigor, and to afford effectual aid to the United States. I learned with great satisfaction that they are sending under convoy, clothing and arms for fifteen thousand men to America, that seventeen ships-of-the-line were already gone to the West Indies, under M. de Guichen, and that five or six more at least are to follow, in addition to ten or twelve they have already there. I asked permission of the Count de Vergennes to write to him on the subject of my mission, which he cheerfully and politely agreed to. I have accordingly written to his Excellency, and shall forward copies of my letter and his answer, as soon as it may be safe to do it.

The English are to borrow twelve millions this year, and it is said that the loan is filled up. They have thrown a sop to Ireland, but have not appeased her rage. They give out exactly such threats as they did last year, and every other year, of terrible preparations. But Congress knows perfectly well how these measures have been accomplished. They will not be more fully executed the next year than the last, and if France and Spain should throw more of their force, especially by sea, into America the next year, America will have no essential injury to feel.

I have learned since my arrival at Paris, with the highest pleasure, the arrival of M. Gerard, Mr. Jay, and Mr. Carmichael, at Cadiz

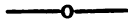
for whose safety we had been under great apprehensions. I have now very solid hopes that a treaty will soon be concluded with Spain, hopes which every thing I saw and heard seemed to favor.

The Alliance frigate, now under the command of Captain Jones, with Captain Cunningham on board, is arrived at Corunna, where she is to be careened, after which she is to return to L'Orient, and from thence to go to America, as I am informed by Dr. Franklin.

Mr. Arthur Lee and Mr. Izard are still in Paris, under many difficulties in procuring a passage home. Mr. William Lee is at Brussels. Mr. Izard has been to Holland, to obtain a passage from thence, but unfortunately missed his opportunity and returned disappointed.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, February 17th, 1780.

Sir,

It is necessary that I should inform Congress in what manner I have been able to procure money to defray my expenses in my long journey, through the greatest part of Spain and France, to this city.

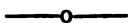
On my arrival at Ferrol, I was offered the loan of money by the French consul, M. de Tournelle, who, at the same time, told me there was a gentleman at Corunna, M. Michael Lagoanere, who had heretofore acted as an American agent at that place, and who would be very happy to supply me. On my arrival at Corunna, M. Lagoanere did me the honor of a visit, and offered me every assistance in cash, otherwise telling me at the same time, he had some money in his hands, which he supposed belonged to the United States, being part of the proceeds of some prizes heretofore made by Captain Cunningham. That this money, however, had been attached in his hands by some Spanish merchant, who had commenced a law-suit against Captain Cunningham. I accordingly received three thousand dollars for myself and Mr. Dana, and a letter of credit on the house of Cabarous at Bayonne, for as much more as I should have occasion for. On our arrival at Bayonne, Mr. Dana and I received of that house fifty louis d'ors, and a bill of exchange on another house of the same name and family at Bordeaux for the like

sums, our expenses having exceeded all our computations at Corunna, as our journey was necessarily much longer than we expected, on account of the uncommon bad weather and bad roads. This bill was paid upon sight. So that, upon the whole, we have received the amount of seventeen thousand four hundred livres, all on account of M. Lagoanere of Corunna. Of this sum, Mr. Dana has received the amount of four thousand nine hundred and seventy-one livres and fifteen sols, and I have received twelve thousand four hundred and twenty-eight livres and five sols, for which sums we desire to be respectively charged in the Treasury books of Congress.

As this money is expended, if M. Lagoanere should draw upon us for it, all the authority we have to draw upon his Excellency the Minister here will not enable us to pay it; and if M. Lagoanere should be so happy as to avoid the attachment and leave us to account with Congress for this money, the small sum we are empowered to receive from his Excellency will go a very little way in discharging our expenses. We must, therefore, pray that Congress would forward us authority to draw upon his Excellency for the amount of our salaries annually, which, without all doubt, will be paid.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

Paris, February 18th, 1790.

My dear General,

You know extremely well the skill of our enemies in forging false news, and their artifice in circulating it, not only through the various parts of Europe, but in the United States of America, to keep up the spirits of their friends and depress those of their adversaries. It is their annual custom in the winter to send abroad large cargoes of these lies, and they meet with a success in making them believed that is really astonishing.

Since my arrival here, I find they have been this winter at their old game again, and have circulated reports here, in Holland, and other parts of Europe, that they have made new contracts with other petty princes in Germany, by which, together with those made before, they will be able to draw seven thousand fresh troops from that country to serve in America. That by appeasing the troubles

in Ireland, they shall be able to avail themselves even of the military associations in that kingdom, by depending upon them for the defence of the country, and to draw near ten thousand men from thence for the service in America. That they have concluded a treaty with the Court of Petersburgh, by which Russia is to furnish them with twelve ships-of-the-line and twenty thousand men, which they say is of the more importance, on account of the intimate connexion between Russia and Denmark, as the latter will be likely by this means to be drawn into the war, with their numerous fleet of forty-five ships-of-the-line. The greatest part of these tales are false. I know very well what is said of Russia is so contrary to all that I have seen and heard of the good understanding between Versailles and Russia, that I have no doubt of its falsehood. But as I am very lately arrived, and, consequently, have not opportunity to examine these reports to the bottom, I beg the favor of you to inform me, with all the exactness possible, how much truth there is in them, if any at all.

You are very sensible that it is of the utmost importance that Congress should have the exactest information of these things, and that you and I cannot render a more useful service to our country at present, than by collecting such intelligence with precision, and transmitting it without delay. Knowing the pleasure you take in serving the United States in every way in your power, I thought I could beg this favor of you with propriety, and that you would believe me always your friend and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO M. GENET, FIRST SECRETARY FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Paris, February 18th, 1790.

Dear Sir,

Whether it is that the art of political lying is better understood in England than in any other country, or whether it is more practised there than elsewhere, or whether it is accidental that they have more success in making their fictions gain credit in the world, I know not. But it is certain that every winter since the commencement of the present war with America, and indeed for some years before, they sent out large quantities of this manufacture over all Europe, and throughout all America, and what is astonishing, is that they should

still find numbers in every country ready to take them off their hands.

Since my arrival in this city, I find they have been this winter at their old trade, and have spread reports here and in Holland, and in various other parts of Europe, and no doubt they have found means to propagate them in America too, tending to keep up the spirits of their friends, and to sink those of their opponents. Such as, that they have made new contracts with several German Princes, by which they are to obtain seven thousand men to serve in America; that they have so skillfully appeased the troubles in Ireland, that they shall ever be able to take advantage of the military associations there, by depending upon them for the defence of the kingdom, while they draw from thence ten thousand regular troops for the service in America; that they have even concluded a treaty with Russia, by which the Empress is to furnish them with twelve ships-of-the-line and twenty thousand men, as some say, and twenty ships-of-the-line and twelve thousand men as others relate. This, they say, is of the greater moment, because of an intimate connexion, I know not of what nature it is, between Russia and Denmark, by which the latter will be likely to be drawn into the war against the House of Bourbon and America; and Denmark, they say, has forty-five ships-of-the-line.

I know very well that the greatest part of these reports is false; and particularly what is said of Russia is so contrary to all those reports which I have heard for these twelve months past of the harmony between Versailles and Petersburgh, that I give no credit to it at all, but I find that all these reports make impressions on some minds, and among the rest some Americans. I therefore beg the favor of you to inform me of the exact truth in all these matters, that I may take the earliest opportunity of transmitting the intelligence to Congress, where it is of importance it should be known.

I was much mortified when I was at Versailles the other day that I could not have the honor of paying my respects to you, but I was so connected with other gentlemen, who were obliged to return to dinner, that I could not; but I shall take the first opportunity I can get to wait on you, and assure you that I am, with great respect &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

## M. DE LA FAYETTE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, February 19th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

As I came but this morning from Versailles, it was not in my power sooner to answer the letter you have honored me with, and this duty I now perform with the more pleasure, as it is of some importance to the interests of America. Since the first day when I had the happiness of making myself and of being considered in the world as an American, I have always observed, that among the many ways of attacking our liberties, and among the most ungenerous ones, misrepresentations have ever been the first weapons on which the British nation has most depended.

I am glad it is in my power generally to assure you that the many reports propagated by them, and alluded to in your letter, are not founded upon truth. New contracts with petty princes in Germany have not, I believe, taken place; and if any such merchandize were sent to America, it would at most consist of a few recruits. The troubles in Ireland, if there is the least common sense among the first patriots of that country, are not I hope at an end, and it seems they now begin to raise our expectations. The Russian troops, so much talked of in their gazettes, I take to be mere recruits for those thirty thousand Russians, that Mr. Rivington had three years ago ordered to embark for America.

Those intelligences, my dear sir, must be counteracted by letters to our friends in America. But as the respect which we owe to the free citizens of the United States makes it a point of duty never to deceive them, and as the most candid frankness must ever distinguish our side of the question from the course of tyranny and falsehood, I intend paying to-morrow morning a visit to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and from him get such minute intelligence as shall answer your purpose.

With the most sincere regard, I have the honor to be, &c.,

LA FAYETTE.

P. S. On my return from Versailles, my dear sir, where I will settle the affairs of arms that I have undertaken, I will impart to you a project privately relating to me, that is not inconsistent with my sentiments for our country, America.

L.

## TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, February 19th, 1780.

Sir,

Enclosed are copies of former letters to Congress, and I shall continue to transmit copies until I learn that some have arrived, for which reason I must request the favor that his Excellency the President, or some committee, may be desired to acknowledge the receipt of letters, so that I may know as soon as may be what letters have arrived, and which have been less fortunate.

The art of making and spreading false news to answer political purposes is not peculiar to Great Britain, but yet she seems to possess this art, and the talent of giving to her fictions the colors of probability beyond other nations; at least, she seems to have more success in making her impostures believed than any other. It is her annual practice in the winter to fabricate and export large quantities of this merchandize to all parts of Europe and America, and she finds more customers to take them off her hands than she ought, considering how illicit the traffic is.

This winter her emissaries have been more assiduous than ever in propagating reports that they have entered into new engagements with several other petty principalities in Germany, by which they shall hire seven thousand men for the service of the next campaign in America. That by compromising with Ireland, they shall be able to take advantage even of the military associations in that kingdom, and draw from them a large number of regular troops for the service in America, depending on the volunteer militia, or associators for the defence of the country; that they have made a treaty with Russia, whereby that Power has engaged to furnish them with twelve ships-of-the-line and twenty thousand troops, as some say, and twenty ships-of-the-line and twelve thousand troops, according to others. This alliance, they say, too, is of the more consequence on account of some connexion between Russia and Denmark, who, it is insinuated, will follow Russia into the war, and Denmark, they add, has forty-five ships-of-the-line, not manned it is true, but England they say can man them.

These tales one would think are so extravagant and absurd, that they would not find a believer in the world. Yet there are persons



who believe them in all nations of Europe, particularly in Holland, and there is no doubt the same song will be sung in America, and many will listen to it. There is nothing further from the truth; they will find the utmost difficulty to draw from Germany troops enough to repair the breaches in the German troops made in America the last year; the same with regard to Ireland. And as to what is said of Russia, there is not even a color of truth in it, but on the contrary, the same good understanding continues between Versailles and Petersburg, which subsisted last winter, spring, and summer. As to Denmark, I have no reason to think that she is disposed to assist Great Britain, but on the contrary that she has armed to defend herself at sea against Great Britain; but if it were otherwise, to what purpose would her ships-of-the-line be unmanned, when Great Britain cannot man the ships-of-the-line she already has?

France seems determined to pursue the naval war with vigor and decision in the American seas. M. de Guichen sailed the beginning of January with seventeen or eighteen ships-of-the-line. Seven more are now preparing at Brest with all possible expedition, supposed to be for America. These, if they all happily join the twelve ships left there by the Count d'Estaing, will make a fleet of six and thirty ships-of-the-line. And the Court seems determined to maintain the superiority in the American seas. This will give scope to our privateers to weaken and distress the enemies of their country, while they are enriching themselves.

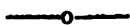
There is no news of Admiral Rodney; from whence I conclude he is gone to the West Indies.

The English have derived such a flush of spirits from their late successes, which are mostly, however, of the negative kind, that they talk in a style very different from that of peace. There are two reflections which the English cannot bear, one is that of losing the domination of the Colonies as indispensable to the support of their naval superiority over France and Spain, or either of them, in possession of a powerful fleet at the peace. Their maxim is to make themselves terrible at sea to all nations, and they are convinced that if they make a peace, leaving America independent, and France and Spain powerful at sea, they shall never again be terrible to any maritime Power. These reasons convince me that Great Britain will hazard all rather than make peace at present. Thompson's

“Britannia,” which expresses the feelings as well as the sentiments of every Briton, is so much to the present purpose, that I hope I shall be pardoned for referring to it, even in a letter to Congress.

I have the honor to be, with the highest esteem, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Paris, February 19th, 1780.

Sir,

I have received the letter which your Excellency did me the honor to write me on the 15th of this month, and lest I should not have explained sufficiently in my letter of the 12th the nature and extent of my commissions, I have now the honor to enclose attested copies of both, as well as of that to Mr. Dana.

With regard to my instructions, I presume your Excellency will not judge it proper that I should communicate them any further than to assure you, as I do in the fullest manner, that they contain nothing inconsistent with the letter or spirit of the treaty between his Majesty and the United States, or the most perfect friendship between France and America, but, on the contrary, the clearest orders to cultivate both. I have hitherto conducted according to your advice, having never communicated to any person since my arrival in Europe the nature of my mission, excepting to your Excellency and Dr. Franklin, to whom it was indeed communicated by a resolution of Congress, and to him in confidence. I shall continue to conceal, as far as may depend upon me, my actual character, but I ought to observe to your Excellency that my appointment was as notorious in America as that of Mr. Jay or Dr. Franklin, before my departure. So it is probably already known to the Court of London, although they have not regular evidence of it. I mention this lest some persons might charge me with publishing what I certainly did not publish.

I thank your Excellency for the assurances of his Majesty's protection and of your confidence, which it shall be my study and endeavor at all times to deserve.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

M. GENET TO JOHN ADAMS.

## Translation.

Versailles, February 20th, 1790.

Sir,

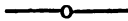
You have been afraid to trouble the Count de Vergennes, and you have done me the honor of addressing yourself to me, in order to know what you are to think of several rumors which the English have endeavored to spread. I am infinitely flattered by the mark of confidence which you have been pleased to give me, but I have thought myself obliged to lay the letter before the Minister. He has directed me to assure you that on every occasion he will be very happy that you should address yourself directly to him, and that you will always find him ready to satisfy your inquiries.

He has remarked, as well as yourself, the address which our enemies use to circulate false reports, and to make Europe believe that the Americans are making advances to them, in order to treat of an arrangement with them. The Count de Vergennes is likewise persuaded of the contrary, as he is assured that no new treaty has been negociated with the princes of Germany, and that no levies are making there, but for the sake of filling up the old ones. He does not think that the news of the treaty with Russia, nor that which relates to the Court of Denmark, are better founded. He told me that I might do myself the honor to write you that all those rumors are false, and that you run no risk in presenting them as such to the persons on whom you think they have made some impressions, both in Europe and America.

I am extremely anxious to have the honor to see you, and congratulate you on your happy return. As I but seldom go to Paris, I wish your business may permit you to do me the honor to call at my house and accept of a family dinner.

I have the honor to be, &amp;c.,

GENET.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, February 20th, 1790.

Sir,

Since my arrival in Europe, I have had the mortification to see in

the public papers a series of little successes which our enemies have had in the prosecution of the war. The first was a very exaggerated account in the English Court Gazette, of their successes against the Spaniards in South America. The next was the history of the repulse of General Lincoln and the Count d'Estaing at Savannah, and the raising of the siege at that post. These were soon followed by the capture of the Spanish fleet of transport ships by Rodney's squadron, and the advantage gained by that admiral over the Spanish ships-of-war, after a most gallant resistance, however, off Gibraltar.

These small triumphs, although chiefly of the defensive and negative kind, and a poor compensation for the blood and the millions they are annually wasting, are, however, sufficient to cheer the spirits of the British populace, and to banish from the minds of the Ministry all thoughts of peace upon reasonable terms; for the English in the present war act upon a maxim diametrically opposite to that of the Romans, and never think of peace upon any event fortunate to them, but are anxious for it under every great adversity.

A report of my appointment having also been carried to England by the cartels from Boston, and being spread in Europe by various other ways, by passengers in the Committee, by French passengers in the *Sensible*, of whom there were a great number who had heard of it in all companies in America, and by many private letters, and the English Ministerial writers having made use of this as evidence of a drooping spirit in America in order to favor their loan of money, I thought it my best policy to communicate my appointment and powers to the French Court, and ask their advice, as our good allies, how to proceed in the present emergency. I accordingly wrote to his Excellency the Count de Vergennes the letter of the 12th of February a copy of which is enclosed; and received his answer of the 15th, a copy of which is enclosed; to which I replied in a letter of the 19th, a copy of which is also enclosed. When I shall receive his Excellency's answer, I shall do myself the honor to enclose that.

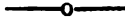
If there is any thing in these letters of mine which is not conformable to the views and sentiments of Congress, I wish to be instructed in it, or if Congress should not concur with his Excellency the Count, I shall obey their orders with the utmost punctuality and alacrity. I have ever understood, that Congress were first advised to

the measure of appointing a Minister to negotiate peace, by the French Minister then at Philadelphia, in the name of the Count de Vergennes. However this may have been, it cannot be improper to have some one in Europe empowered to think and treat of peace, which some time or other must come.

Since my last, which was of yesterday's date, I have had opportunity to make more particular inquiries concerning the pretended treaty with Russia, and am informed, that the English Ministry did, not long since, make a formal application by their Ambassador to the Empress of Russia for a body of troops and a number of ships; but that the application was opposed with great spirit and ability in the Russian Council, particularly by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and rejected in council with great unanimity, and that the harmony between Versailles and Petersburg remains as perfect as when I left France.

I have the honor to be, with very great respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO JOHN JAY, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY AT MADRID.

Paris, February 22d, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I most sincerely congratulate you on your happy arrival in Europe, which must be the more agreeable to you for the terrible voyages you have had. Every good American in Europe, I believe, suffered a great anxiety from the length of time that passed between the day when it was known that the Confederacy sailed, and the time when the news arrived of your being in Cadiz. I, too, have had my hair-breadth escapes, and, after my arrival, a very tedious journey in the worst season of the year by land. Happy, however, shall we be, if all our hazards and fatigues should contribute to lay the foundation of a free and prosperous people.

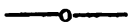
I hope no accident or disagreeable circumstance has happened to your family, to whom I shall be obliged to you to present my respects. From what I saw and heard in Spain, from the strong assurances I received of the good will of the court and nation, and from the great attention and respect that were paid me by officers of Government of the highest rank in the provinces through which I passed, I am persuaded you will meet with the most distinguished

reception, and I hope will soon have the honor and satisfaction of concluding a treaty with Spain. You will have the advantage of more frequent and speedy intelligence from home than we can have here, at least you will have it in your power. There are vessels oftener arriving from America at Bilboa and Cadiz, I think, than in France. Many of these vessels come from Boston and Newburyport—perhaps the most of them. So that by directing your correspondents to send their letters that way, you will have them much sooner than we can commonly obtain them; and by transmitting yours to Messrs. Gardoqui & Co., at Bilboa, and Mr. Montgomery, or some other, at Cadiz, your despatches will go more speedily and more safely than ours, for we find it almost impossible to get a letter across the Bay of Biscay from France in a merchant vessel, there are so many privateers in the route; the danger of whom is avoided chiefly by vessels from Bilboa keeping near the coast, and running into harbor in case of danger, and wholly by those from Cadiz. You will excuse my mentioning to you this channel of intelligence, which might not possibly have occurred to you, and my wishing to make some advantage of it to myself, by asking the favor of your correspondence, and that you will impart to me the advices you may receive through it.

We have nothing new here at present but what you have had before. Pray what think you of peace? It seems to be the will of Heaven that the English should have success enough to lead them on to final destruction. They are quite intoxicated with their late advantages, although a poor compensation for what they cost.

My respects to Mr. Carmichael, and believe me to be, with respect and esteem, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, February 23d, 1780.

Sir,

Having been informed this morning by the Marquis de la Fayette of another opportunity for America, I have the honor to enclose to Congress triplicates of former letters, and copies of some other letters which I have written and received lately. I have also packed up all the newspapers and pamphlets I can obtain. The *Mercure de*

*France* is a weekly publication of very ancient origin, and is become lately very interesting to America, because those political intelligences and speculations which were formerly published in another pamphlet, under the title of *Affaires de l'Angleterre et de l'Amérique* are now published in this, the other having been dropped. The *Courrier de l'Europe* has the most extensive circulation of any gazette, although supposed to be rather too much under the influence of the British Ministry sometimes; the *Gazette de France* is published by authority here, and has a great reputation for integrity; in the *Gazette de la Hague* the English find means to publish many false reports. These papers and pamphlets, together with one or two English papers, for which I shall subscribe as soon as possible, I shall do myself the honor to transmit to Congress constantly as they come out. From these, Congress will be able to collect from time to time all the public news of Europe.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—  
TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Paris, February 23d, 1790.

Dear Sir,

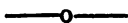
You will see by the public papers, that your Committee of Correspondence is making greater progress in the world, and doing greater things in the political world than the electrical rod ever did in the physical; Ireland and England have adopted it, but mean plagiarists as they are, they do not acknowledge who was the inventor of it. Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard will go with this letter in the Alliance, and probably go to Boston. They will be able to inform you of every thing of a public nature much better than I can do, as I have scarcely had opportunity to look about me as yet. They will give you few hopes of peace, at least very speedily.

The associations of counties and committees of correspondence in England are very ominous to our old acquaintances the refugees, as they attack unmerited pensions in the first place. But they must do greater things than distressing these gentry; they must necessarily produce great commotions in the nation. The speeches at these meetings go great lengths, some of them openly justifying and applauding the Americans, and others even applauding France and

Spain for stepping in to our assistance. The Court here seems determined more than ever to pursue the war with vigor, especially by sea, and above all in the American seas. They have already sent seventeen ships-of-the-line under M. de Guichen, to reinforce M. de la Motte Piquet, and seven others are preparing at Brest. They are sending out clothing and arms for fifteen thousand men for our army, and seem confident that the next campaign will be better than the last. I hope the spirit of privateering among us will increase, because I think this is the way in which we can do the most service to the common cause. I hope you will be so good as to inform me of what passes, particularly what progress the Convention makes in the Constitution.\* I assure you it is more comfortable making constitutions in the dead of winter at Cambridge or Boston, than sailing in a leaky ship, or climbing on foot, or upon mules, over the mountains of Galicia and the Pyrenees.

Believe me your friend and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO GENERAL JAMES WARREN.

Paris, February 23d, 1780.

Dear Sir,

The French Court seems to be now every day more and more convinced of the good policy, and indeed the necessity of prosecuting the war with vigor in the American seas. They have been, and are making great preparations accordingly, and are determined to maintain a clear superiority.

M. de la Motte Piquet has with him the Hannibal, the Magnifique, the Diadème, the Dauphin Royal, the Artisane, the Réfléchi, and the Vengeur, and if M. de Grace has joined him from the Chesapeake Bay, the Robuste, the Fendant, and the Sphinx; in all ten ships-of-the-line. M. de Guichen has gone to join him with the Couronne, eighty guns; the Triumphant, eighty; the Palmier, the Victoire, the Destin, the Conquérant, the Citoyen, the Intrépide, the Hercule, and the Souverain, all of seventy-four; the Jason, the Actionnaire, the Caton, the Julien, the Solitaire, the St. Michael, and the Triton,

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\* Convention of Massachusetts, of which Mr. Adams had been chosen a member soon after his return from France.



all of sixty-four; the frigates the *Medea*, *Courageuse*, *Gentille*, and the *Charmante*, all of thirty-two. He had above a hundred sail of vessels under his convoy, and the regiment of *Touraine* and *Enghien*, of more than thirteen hundred men each, and the second battalions of *Royal Corntois* and of *Walsh*, of seven hundred men each, making in the whole more than four thousand troops. Besides these, there are seven more preparing at *Brest* to sail.

*M. Gerard*, *Mr. Jay*, and *Mr. Carmichael*, are arrived at *Cadiz* in a French frigate, the *Confederacy* having been dismasted, and driven to *Martinique*. The *Alliance* carries this, with *Mr. Lee* and *Mr. Izard*, who will no doubt be treated with all respect at *Boston*.

Notwithstanding the commotions in *England* and *Ireland*, the success of *Provost* at *Savannah*, and of *Rodney* off *Gibraltar*, and even the silly story of *Omoa*, in *South America*, is enough to embolden the Ministry to go on with a debt of two hundred millions, already contracted, to borrow twelve or fourteen millions a year, in the beginning of a war with *France* and *Spain*, each having a greater navy than they ever had, each discovering a greater fighting spirit than they ever did before, and obliging the English to purchase every advantage at a dear rate. The premiums and bounties that they are obliged to give to raise men, both for the service by sea and land, and the interest of money they borrow, are greater than were ever given in any former wars, even in the last year of the last war. This cannot always last, nor indeed long. Yet I do not expect to see peace very soon.

Pray write me as often as possible, and send the newspapers to me.

Your friend and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—

COUNT DE VERGENNES TO JOHN ADAMS.

Translation.

Versailles, February 24th, 1780.

Sir,

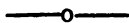
I have received the letter which you have done me the honor to write me the 19th of this month. Your full powers, of which you have been pleased to send me a copy, are perfectly conformable to what *M. Gerard* has written to me about them, and they leave us

nothing to wish for as to the form or matter. I think there will be no inconveniency in informing the public of the principal object of your mission—I mean the future pacification. It will be announced in the Gazette of France, when it will mention your presentation to the King and royal family, and you will be at liberty to give your eventual character a greater publicity, by having it published in the Dutch papers. I could only wish that you would be so kind as to communicate the article to me before you transmit it. With regard to the full powers which authorize you to negotiate a treaty of commerce with the Court of London, I think it will be prudent not to communicate them to any body whatever, and to take every necessary precaution that the British Ministry may not have a premature knowledge of them. You will no doubt easily feel the motives which induce me to advise you to take this precaution, and it would be needless to explain them.

With regard to your instructions, sir, I am satisfied that they have for their certain and invariable basis the treaties subsisting between the King and the United States. M. Gerard has assured the King of it in the most positive manner, and his Majesty does more justice to the uprightness of Congress, and to the stability of the sentiments which they have hitherto manifested, than to have ever entertained, or to entertain, the least doubt on this subject. This way of thinking will convince you, sir, that we have no need of seeing your instructions to appreciate properly the principles and dispositions of Congress towards Great Britain.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

DE VERGENNES.



TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Paris, February 25th, 1780.

Sir,

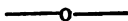
I had last evening the honor of your Excellency's letter of yesterday's date, and shall conform myself to your advice.

I shall esteem myself highly honored by a presentation to the King and royal family, and shall wait your Excellency's directions concerning the time of it, and shall not think myself at liberty to make any publication of my powers to treat of peace, until it shall have been announced in the Gazette. After which, I shall transmit

to your Excellency any paragraph which may be thought proper to publish in the gazettes of Holland, and take your advice upon it before it is sent. My other powers shall be concealed according to your advice, and I shall have the honor to pay my respects to your Excellency very soon at Versailles.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, February 25th, 1780.

Sir,

Since my letter of the 20th I have received another letter from his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, dated the 24th of February, which I answered this day. Copies of both letters are enclosed.

I have also the honor to enclose a gazette, and an application from Mr. Comyn, of Marseilles, to be a consul for the ports of Provence and Languedoc. I know nothing of this gentleman but what he says of himself.

By the enclosed gazette, as well as by many others, Congress will see of what wonderful efficacy in pulling down tyranny a committee of correspondence is likely to be. Ireland has done great things by means of it; England is attempting great things with it, after the example of the Americans, who invented it and first taught its use. Yet all does not seem to produce the proper gratitude on the minds of the English towards their benefactors. However, the glory of the invention is as certainly ours as that of electrical rods, Hadley's quadrant, or inoculation for the small-pox.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, February 27th, 1780.

Sir,

There are so many gentlemen of rank going out to America, that there can be no doubt Congress will be fully informed of the state of public affairs.

Mr. Lee, Mr. Izard, the Marquis de la Fayette, Mr. Wharton, and many others, are going by different vessels. Besides these Monsieur

de l'Etombe, who is appointed Consul General of France for the northern district of America, as M. Holker for the middle, (I have not yet learned who for the southern,) will go soon.

There is an armament preparing with the greatest expedition at Brest, which is to be commanded by M. de Ternay, and to consist of eight or ten ships-of-the-line and frigates—six of-the-line and several frigates, as it is said, (perhaps it is not yet certain nor determined exactly how many of either,) with several thousand men; all numbers are mentioned from six to ten thousand men, under the general officers de Rochambeau and Jaucourt. Whether this force is destined to the continent or West Indies, time will discover; at present it ought not to be known. On the other hand, I see by a paragraph in a London paper of the 16th of this month, that the Thunderer, Torbay, Ramilles, Royal Oak, Triumph, and Egmont, are ordered for the West Indies, under Captain Walsingham; the Southampton, St. Albans, and Winchelsea, which were talked of to go with him, are found unfit for service, and in so bad a condition as to be ordered to be paid off. Thus the French are likely to be drawn into the American seas in sufficient force, where they have great advantages in carrying on the war. It is much to be wished that the Spaniards could be drawn into the same field of battle, for Gibraltar must be taken in America if ever.

There are some persons, however, who think that the English will avenge the French, the Spaniards, and above all the Americans, upon one another, and it is certain that parties in England are working up to a crisis. The petitions of the counties, their numerous committees of correspondence, their hints of associations, have most certainly alarmed the King and his Ministers to so great a degree, that for some time their conduct was equivocal, giving hopes at times to the people that the Crown would favor the desired reformation in the expenditure of money. But upon the news of Rodney's successes, they grew bolder, and determined to exert all the authority of the Crown to suppress the meetings of the people. Accordingly the cry of faction, sedition, and rebellion, was set up in Parliament by the majority, and the King was advised to dismiss those lieutenants of counties who had favored the meetings of the people—advice which he has certainly taken. This is a decisive measure. It will either discourage and suppress those meetings, petitions, correspondence, and associations altogether, or it will give them greater force.

By a debate in the House of Commons on the 14th of this month, one would think that the nation was nearly on the brink of a civil war. Yet, I confess, I cannot think that there are any characters at present in whom the nation have sufficient confidence to venture themselves at any lengths under their guidance; and I believe that this spirited conduct of the King will defeat the measures of the counties, unless, indeed, in the course of the next campaign, his arms especially by sea, should meet with any signal defeat, which would perhaps reanimate the people. But supposing the people go on and succeed so far as to effect a change in the Ministry, the question is, whether this would be an advantage to us or our allies? I am myself very far from being convinced that it would.

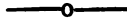
There are none of the principal leaders of the people who avow any fixed principle that we can depend upon. None that avow a design of acknowledging our independence, or even of making peace.

By letters which I have received from Brussels and Holland, since my arrival, I am told that the late desperate step of the English in seizing the Dutch ships has made a great change in the minds of the people there, and the Government, too, in our favor; even the Prince declares he has been deceived by the English, and that he will promote unlimited convoys; that an American Minister is much wished for, who, although he might not yet be publicly received, would be able to do as much good as if he was; that money might be borrowed there by such a Minister directly sent by Congress, applying directly to solid Dutch houses. I hope every hour to hear of Mr. Laurens's arrival.

I have subscribed for the English papers, but have not yet received any, which I am sorry for, because I can get none to enclose. As fast as they come to me I will send them. I have the honor to enclose another *Mercure de France*.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO DR. COOPER, OF BOSTON.

Paris, February 28th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

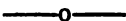
This will be delivered to you by the Marquis, your friend. Your

grandson is well and very contented. He has seen the world ; to be sure, such a part of it that none of the rest can ever be superlatively disagreeable to him hereafter.\*

Instead of wishing and hoping for peace, my dear countrymen must qualify themselves for war, and learn the value of liberty by the dearness of its purchase. The foundations of lasting prosperity are laid in great military talents and virtues. Every sigh for peace, until it can be obtained with honor, is unmanly. If our enemies can be obstinate and desperate in a wicked and disgraceful cause, surely we can be determined and persevering in the most just, the most honorable, and the most glorious cause that was ever undertaken by men.

I am, with great affection, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, February 29th, 1780.

Sir,

I have this moment received a letter from M. Genet, who is one of the first Secretaries in the office of Foreign Affairs, and who has the care of publishing all things relative to America, and has already translated the constitutions of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina, requesting me to assist him in procuring those of Georgia, North Carolina, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts Bay, and New Hampshire.

There is so great a curiosity through all Europe to see our new constitutions, and those already published in the languages of Europe have done us so much honor, that I thought I should be excusable in making a direct request to Congress for their assistance in procuring those which M. Genet still desires. Those of Rhode Island and Connecticut being according to their ancient charters, M. Genet has already ; those of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, whenever they shall be formed and established, will be easily obtained. But those of North Carolina and Georgia I could not obtain when I was at Boston, and these are therefore the ones which M. Genet wants at present, and which I have ventured to beg the aid of Congress to procure.

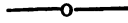
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\* Alluding to the journey through the north of Spain.

I have the honor to enclose the gazette of the day, in which Congress will see the news from England and Holland.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 3d, 1780.

Sir,

The news of the day is, that Rodney has gone with his whole fleet to the West Indies, that Du Chaffault is to command the French fleet in America, and the Count d'Estaing in the Channel; that a large force is to go to America, either to the Islands or to the continent, both of ships and troops in two divisions; that the last letters from Holland breathe a spiritsome what warlike, and indeed the English have treated them with so much indignity and contempt as well as injustice, that one would think it was not always to be borne.

It is not agreeable to my principles, nor to my feelings, to injure the character even of an enemy at war; but it is often possible to draw important inferences from the true known character of a commander of the forces of an enemy. It is therefore my duty to mention, that Rodney is reported to be a man of dissipation and prodigality, a great spendthrift, and virulent against us; that he has often declared that if he had a command in America, his mode to humiliate and subdue us should be to burn every town and every house that he could come at upon the sea-coast.

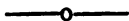
That such a plan of military execution will be sooner or later adopted by the Court of London, I have not the least doubt, from their known principles, tempers, characters, and past conduct, provided it should ever be in their power to attempt it in the whole or in part. And if this is the disposition and system of their Admiral Rodney, the appointment of him raises a presumption that they have given him express orders to this purpose at this time. An uncommon coincidence of favorable circumstances has thrown the whole Caracas fleet into his hands, and given a victory, although pretty dearly paid for, over a much inferior fleet of Spanish men-of-war. If he is, therefore, a man of such levity as is represented, and so malicious against us, and has such malignant orders from his Court, and goes

to America flushed and giddy with success, we may expect he will do mischief if he can, and we ought to be upon our guard.

My business is peace, but I think of nothing but war. While our enemies think of nothing else, we ought not to think more of peace than to be ready to treat of it, as soon as it shall be put into the hearts of our foes to be willing for it. Americans must be soldiers, they must war by sea and land, they have no other security.

I have the honor to enclose the gazette of the day, and to be with much respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 4th, 1780.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose the *Mercure de France* of this day, which contains, among other interesting intelligence, Admiral Rodney's narration, after his good fortune on the 8th of January last in meeting the Spanish Caracas fleet, which sailed from St. Sebastian the 1st of January, under convoy of seven armed vessels belonging to the Caracas company. The Guipuscoa, of sixty-four guns, and five hundred and fifty men; the San Carlos, of thirty-two guns, and two hundred men; the San Raphael, of thirty guns, and one hundred and fifty-five men; the Santa Theresa, of twenty-eight guns, and one hundred and fifty men; the Corbetta San Firmin, of sixteen guns, and sixty men; these armed vessels were all taken, and the Guipuscoa was christened Prince William, in honor of his royal Highness, in whose presence she was taken and given to one of the English captains, as a better ship than his former one, the Bien-faisant.

The merchant vessels under this convoy are the Nostra Senora de l'Ores, the San Francisco, the Conception, the San Nicholas, the Jeronimo, the Divina Providentia, the San Gibilan, the San Pactora, the San Lauren, the Belona, and the Esperanza, all loaded with flour and corn. The Cervidada de Merica, loaded with provisions for the navy, the Amisted, the San Michael, loaded with anchors and cables, and the Bilbao, loaded with tobacco. Those with provisions for the navy, and that with tobacco, were sent to England under convoy of the America and the Pearl, and those with corn and flour were carried into Gibraltar.



This fleet seems to have been met at sea by the Admiral by perfect accident, of which the English do not appear to have had the least hope, nor the Spaniards the smallest fear. It must, therefore, be allowed to be one instance of the good fortune of the English Ministry and their Admiral, or rather as it is reported, of the King and his Admiral.

Their good fortune, however, did not end here, for eight days afterwards, on the 16th of January, they fell in with Don Juan de Langura, with eleven vessels-of-the-line, who being so much inferior, could not hope for a victory. He fought the English, however, upon the retreat with so much bravery, skill, and success, that they were able to take only three of his ships. The Phœnix, of eighty guns, and the Princessa, and Diligent, of seventy-four, were taken and the San Domingo blown up. The S. Genero, the S. Justo, and the Monarcha, having separated before the battle, and the S. Juliano, the S. Eugenio, the S. Augustine, and S. Lorenzo, having since arrived in Cadiz, although in a bad condition.

Thus the English have been permitted, against probabilities and appearances, to throw succor into Gibraltar, and perhaps Mahon, to give a little fresh confidence to the Ministry, and make a few bonfires for the populace, but have added very little to their riches or their power. In the mean time, Rodney must have been retarded by these unlucky accidents in his course to the West Indies, and given opportunity to the Count de Guichen to arrive before him in the West Indies, and prevent the reconquest of the Grenadas, and perhaps do more; but of this Congress will be informed sooner than I.

These successes have not suppressed the independent spirit of Ireland, which is going on in a regular train, deliberating upon bills for the independence of the judges, the habeas corpus, the restriction of subsidies, and discipline of their troops; and they seem determined to throw off all the authority of the British Parliament; nor that of the Committees of Correspondence and petitioners in the counties of England which threaten associations, and, as the Ministry themselves say, sedition, faction, tumults, and rebellion; nor provided a fleet for the British channel for the ensuing summer, nor assuaged the serious resentment of Holland for the piracies committed in violation of the faith of treaties, as well as the laws of nature and nations, upon their commerce. As it is most interesting to us to

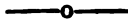
know the forces to be employed in America, by which word I comprehend the West India Islands, as well as the coasts of the Continent, all these being connected together in such a manner as to make but one whole, I beg leave to lay before Congress in one view the French force that is intended to be in that service.

There are actually at Cape François, the *Tonnant*, of eighty-four guns; the *Robuste* and the *Fendant*, of seventy-four; the *Sphinx*, of sixty-four; and the *Amphion*, of fifty; in all, five. At Martinique, the *Admirable*, the *Magnifique*, the *Dauphin Royal*, and the *Diadème*, of seventy-four; the *Réfléchi*, the *Vengeur*, the *Artisane*, of sixty-four; and the *Fiers*, of fifty. In all eight, making in the whole thirteen ships-of-the-line, reckoning as such two fiftys. If the Count de Guichen should, happily, arrive, he has seventeen, which will amount to the number of thirty, besides frigates. Six others are preparing at Brest with all possible expedition, under the command of M. de Ternay. The *Duc de Burgone*, of eighty guns; the *Neptune*, of seventy-four, M. Destouches; the *Magnanime*, of seventy-four, M. de Vaudreuil; the *Eveille*, of sixty-four, M. de Trobuiand; the *Jason*, of sixty-four, M. de Marigny. With this fleet the troops are to be embarked; and there are many conjectures that it is intended for North America. The *Languedoc*, the *Cæsar*, the *Provence*, and the *Fantasque*, of the fleet of the Count d'Estaing, are careened and refitted, and the *Royal Louis*, of one hundred and ten guns, the *Northumberland*, and the *Astrea*, are to be launched immediately.

In the course of my perigrinations at Brest, L'Orient, and Ferrol, I have had an opportunity to see most of these ships, and to be on board many of them, and one would think there was force enough to protect us, and quiet our fears; but the battle is not always to the strong, and we must wait patiently for time to decide events.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Paris, March 4th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

This will be delivered to you by Mr. Izard, who goes out in the

Alliance, with Mr. Lee, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Brown, and others. He will wait on you, of course, and will be able to give you good information concerning the intentions of the English, and their military preparations by sea and land, and those of the French and Spaniards at the same time. He will also give his opinion very freely concerning American and other characters here, as well as measures.

In many things his opinions may be just, but in some, and those not a few, I am sure they are wrong. The great principle, in which I have differed from him, is this: in the mode of treating with this Court. He has been always of opinion that it was good policy and necessary to hold a high language to this Court; to represent to them the danger of our being subdued, if they did not do this and the other thing for us, in order to obtain money and other aids from them. He is confident they would not have dared to refuse any thing.

Although no man in America, or in the world, was earlier convinced than I was that it was the interest of France and Spain to support the independence of America, and that they would support it, and that no man is more sensible than I am of the necessity they are under to support us, yet I am not, nor ever was, of opinion, that we could ever treat or with good policy assume the style of menace, and threaten them with returning again to Great Britain, and joining against France and Spain, even telling them that we should be ruined, because I never believed this myself, and the Court here never so have believed it from us. The Court have many difficulties to manage, as well as we, and it is delicate and hazardous to use threats in this country. Things are not to be negotiated here as they are with the people of America, even with the Tories in America, or with the people of England. There is a frankness, however, that ought to be used with the Ministry, and a candor with which the truth may be, and has been, communicated; but there is a hardness that would not fail to ruin, in my opinion, the American negotiation in this country.

We are anxious to hear from you, having nothing since the beginning of December, and very little since we left you.

Your friend and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 8th, 1780.

Sir,

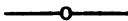
Yesterday I went to Court, in company with the American Minister Plenipotentiary, and had the honor to be presented to the King by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, after which I had the honor to go round with all the foreign Ambassadors, and make a visit to the Queen, the King's brothers, sister, aunts, and daughters, which are all the branches of the royal family, and to be presented to each of them in turn, and after them, to the Count de Maurepas.

After these ceremonies were over, we were all invited to dine with the Count de Vergennes.

As ceremonies of this kind are so much attended to in this and all other countries of Europe, and have often such important effects, it is proper that Congress should have information of them.

I have the honor to be, &amp;c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

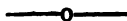
Paris, March 8th, 1780.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose to Congress the gazettes of France, of the Hague, and Amsterdam, of the 1st, 3d, and 4th of this month. They contain all the news which makes the subject of conversation at this time, except that M. du Chaffault is to command in the West Indies, and the Count d'Estaing in the Channel, which, although it is not announced by the Court, seems to be very generally believed in the world.

I have the honor to be, &amp;c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 10th, 1780.

Sir,

Enclosed are the *Courrier de l'Europe* of the 3d, and the *Gazette de France* of this day. The House of Lords and the House of Commons are voting thanks to Admiral Rodney for his good fortune,

for they all seem to confess that his brilliant successes were not owing to more skill, valor, or vigilance than others have shown, but merely to his good luck, which, by a report that spreads and gains credit to-day, did not end with his advantage over Langara, and his safe departure from Gibraltar. It is said that two French ships-of-the-line and several frigates with transports, bound to the Isle of France, in the East Indies, have been doomed to fall in his way, and be taken.

Whether this is true or not, he has done enough, it seems, to be in a fair way of paying his creditors some part of their demands for money, which he has gambled away, and which they had despaired of ever receiving. This run of good luck, however, could never have happened to the gambler, if the game had been played otherwise by the opposite party; if France and Spain, instead of keeping immense fleets in Europe with nothing to do, or employed in blocking up Gibraltar, which is a trifle, if taken in comparison of other objects in view, had but employed but a fourth part of them in the American seas, where they had, and still have, the enemies in their power, Rodney's creditors had still been in despair, together with the British Government and nation.

I would not desire a better proof that the English are in the power of their enemies in the American world than the list of the prizes printed in the *Courrier de l'Europe*, as condemned by N. Cushing, Judge of Admiralty for the middle district of Massachusetts Bay. I am very glad to see this method taken of publishing to the world the success of our privateers, because it will in time show our allies where our strength lies, and the weakness of our enemies.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 12th, 1780.

Sir,

It is an observation made some years ago by a great writer of this nation, de Mably, that the project of being sole master of the sea, and of commanding all the commerce, is not less chimerical nor less ruinous than that of universal monarchy on land, and it is to be wished, for the happiness of Europe, that the English may be

convinced of this truth before they shall learn it by their own experience. France has already repeated several times, that it was necessary to establish an equilibrium, a balance of power at sea, and she has not yet convinced any body, because she is the dominant Power and because they suspect her to desire the abasement of the English only that she may domineer the more surely on the continent. But if England abuses her power, and would exercise a kind of tyranny over commerce, presently all the States that have vessels and sailors, astonished that they had not before believed France, will join themselves to her in avenging her injuries.

The present conjuncture of affairs resembles so exactly the case here put, that it seems to be a literal fulfillment of a prophecy.

A domination upon the sea is so much the more dangerous to other maritime Powers and commercial nations, as it is more difficult to form alliances and combine forces at sea than at land. For which reason it is essential that the Sovereign of every commercial State should make his nation's flag respected in all the seas, and by all the nations of the world. The English have ever acted upon this principle in supporting the honor of their own flag, but of late years have grown less and less attentive to it, as it respects the honor of other flags. Not content with making their flag respectable, they have grown more and more ambitious of making it terrible. Unwilling to do as they would be done by, and to treat other commercial nations as they have insisted upon being treated by them, they have grown continually more and more haughty, turbulent, and insolent upon the seas, and are now never satisfied until they have made all other nations see that they despise them upon that element. It is said by the Baron de Bielfield, that piracies and robberies at sea are so odious, so atrocious, and so destructive to the interest of all the European nations, that every thing is permitted to repress them. Providence has not granted to any people an exclusive empire upon the seas. To aim at setting up a master there to prescribe laws to other free nations, is an outrage to all Europe.

I have quoted these authorities because they contain the true principle upon which, as I have ever conceived, the English began this war, and upon which they will assuredly continue it, as long as they can get men and money, which will be as long as they have success. They contain also the true principles of France, Spain,

and Holland, and all the Powers of Europe. The outrages committed upon the Dutch commerce, and the insults offered to their flag, ought to be, and are, alarming to all the maritime Powers. The late successes of the English will have no tendency to allay the fears of these Powers; on the contrary they will increase the alarm, by showing the precarious situation they will all be in if England should finally succeed, which some of them may perhaps apprehend from the late brilliant fortune of Admiral Rodney.

One cannot but be struck with the rapid series of fortunate incidents for the English, which have been published here in about the course of three months, that I have been in Europe. The little affair of Omoa began it; the repulse at Savannah succeeded, with all its consequences, the Curaçoa fleet was next; Langara's fleet soon followed; Gibraltar was relieved; Don Gastons's squadron was dispersed by a storm; and Admiral Rodney had opportunity to get safe out of Gibraltar. The French East India fleet brings up the rear. There is hardly in history such a series of events, that no human wisdom could provide against or foresee. Yet after all, the advantages gained are by no means decisive, although no doubt it will raise the ambition of the English, and in some degree damp the ardor of their enemies.

It must not have this effect, however, upon America. Let the maritime Powers fare as they will, we must be free, and I trust in God we shall be so, whatever be their fate. The events of war are uncertain at sea, more than even by land; but America has resources for the final defence of her liberty which Britain will never be able to exhaust, though she should exhaust France and Spain, and it may not impossibly be our hard fate, but it will be our unfading glory finally to turn the scale of the war, to humble the pride, which is so terrible to the commercial nations of Europe, and to produce a balance of power on the seas. To this end Americans must be soldiers and seamen.

It is proper, however, to keep constantly in sight the Power against which we have to contend; the English have in all the ports of England, in a condition for actual service, or at least given out and reported to be so, twenty ships-of-the-line. In the course of the spring and the month of June, eight others which are now repairing, and three new ones in the course of the year. The whole squadron for the channel will be thirty-one. The squadron of Arbuthnot, at

New York, consists of five. That of Jarvis at the Western Islands is two, including the Dublin, which was detached from Admiral Rodney, and is now in bad condition at Lisbon. One only at Jamaica, for the Lion is too far ruined to be counted. The fleet at the other islands, joined by the Hector, detached from Rodney, the Triumph and the Intrepid, lately sailed from England, are nineteen, seven of which at least are in too bad a condition for actual service. That of India, including two of which serve for convoys, consists of ten, two of which, however, are returning to be repaired or condemned; the Lenox is a guard-ship in Ireland.

Rodney entered Gibraltar with four Spanish ships-of-the-line, the Phœnix of eighty guns, the Monarca, the Princessa, and the Diligente of seventy, besides the Guipuscoa, now the Prince William, of sixty-five, which he took with the convoy on the 8th of January. He entered, also, with the Shrewsbury of seventy-four, which joined from Lisbon. His squadron must therefore have consisted of twenty-four ships-of-the-line. If he left the Panther and another at Gibraltar, he must have gone out with twenty-two. Whether he has gone with the whole fleet to the West Indies, or whether with part of it, and what part, is yet undetermined by the public.

France and Spain, however, have a vast superiority still remaining, which, if it should be ably managed, will easily humble the English; but if it should be unwisely managed, or continue to be as unfortunate as it has been from the moment of the Count d'Estaing's sailing from Toulon, it will even in this case last long enough to consume and exhaust their enemies.

I have the honor to enclose the *Mercure de France* of the 11th of March, the Hague Gazette of the 6th and 8th, the Amsterdam Gazette of the 7th, and the Leyden of the 7th.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—  
TO EDMUND JENNINGS.\*

Paris, March 12th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of three excellent letters, one of

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\* Mr. Jennings was an American, and although he resided in London during the war, he was a warm friend to the cause of his country.



the 1st, the others of the 5th and 8th of March. I thank you for the copy of your letter to the Pensioner, and for your dialogue between York and Chatham.

It is undoubtedly the duty of every commercial nation to make their flag respected in all the seas and by all the nations, not by insulting and injuring all others like Great Britain, but by doing justice to all others, and by insisting upon justice from them. But how is Holland to obtain justice from the English, who take a manifest pleasure and pride in showing her and all Europe that they despise her? Holland seems to be as corrupted and unprincipled as Great Britain; but there is one great difference between them: Great Britain has a terrible naval force, Holland has next to none. Great Britain has courage and confidence in her power, Holland has none. I do not mean that the Dutch are destitute of personal courage, but national courage is a very different thing.

The curious doctrine of a constitutional impossibility of acknowledging our independence is well exposed in your dialogue. I suppose the idea was taken from Lord Chatham's dying speech, when he conjured up the ghost of the Princess Sophia of Hanover, to whose posterity, being Protestants, the act of settlement had consecrated the succession of the Crown and its authority over all parts of the dominions. This was a masterly stroke of oratory, to be sure, and shows that my Lord Chatham, in his last moments, had not lost the knowledge of the prejudices in the character of the English nation, nor the arts of popularity. But a more manifest address to the passions and prejudices of the populace, without the least attention to the justice or policy of the principle, never fell from a popular orator, ancient or modern. Could my Lord Chatham contend that the heirs of the Princess Sophia of Hanover, provided they should be Protestants, had the throne and its prerogatives entailed upon them, to everlasting ages, over all parts of the British dominions, let them do what they would? Govern without Parliament, by laws without law, dismiss judges without fault, suspend laws, in short do every thing that the Stuarts did, and ten times more, yet so long as they were Protestants, could there be no resistance to their will, and no forfeiture of their right to govern? I said this was a figure of rhetoric, employed by his lordship *ad captandum vulgus*. I believe so still, but I believe he meant it also *ad captandum regem*, and that he thought by throwing out this idea, that he was not for

acknowledging our independence, the King, who at that time was distressed for a Minister able in conducting a war, would call him into the Ministry. I ever lamented this black spot in a very bright character. I do not remember any thing in his lordship's conduct which seemed to me so suspicious to have proceeded from a perverted heart as this flight. Allowance, however, ought to be made ; perhaps he was misunderstood, and would have explained himself fairly if he had lived.

I have not seen the pamphlet entitled *Facts*, nor that by Lloyd, nor the *Examen*. I should be glad to see all of them. I find a difficulty in getting pamphlets from England ; but I shall have a channel to obtain them by-and-by. I went to Mr. Grant's as soon as I received yours of the 8th. Mr. Grant the father was out, and no other in the house knew anything of your letter, or maps, or other things. I will speak to the father the first opportunity. Mr. Lee is gone to L'Orient.

What think you of luck? Had any gambler ever so much as Rodney? One of our Tories in Boston, or half-way Whigs, told me once, God loves that little island of Old England, and the people that live upon it. I suppose he would say now, God loves Rodney. I do not draw the same conclusion from the successes that the island or the hero have had. Who can be persuaded to believe that he loves so degenerate and profligate a race? I think it more probable that Heaven has permitted this series of good fortune to attend the wicked that the righteous Americans may reflect in time, and place their confidence in their own patience, fortitude, perseverance, political wisdom, and military talents, under the protection and blessing of His providence.

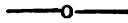
There are those who believe that if France and Spain had not interposed, America would have been crushed. There are in other parts of Europe, I am told, a greater number who believe that, if it had not been for the interposition of France and Spain, American independence would have been acknowledged by Great Britain a year or two ago. I believe neither the one nor the other. I know the deep roots of American independence on one side of the water, and I know the deep roots of the aversion to it on the other. If it was rational to suppose that the English should succeed in their design, and endeavor to destroy the fleets and naval power of France and Spain, (which they are determined to do if they can,) what

would be the consequence? There are long lists of French and Spanish ships-of-the-line yet to be destroyed, which would cost the English several campaigns and a long roll of millions; and after this they may send sixty thousand men to America, if they can get them, and what then? Why, the glory of baffling, exhausting, beating, and taking them, will finally be that of the American yeomanry, whose numbers have increased every year since this war began, as I learned with certainty in my late visit home, and will increase every year, in spite of all the art, malice, skill, valor, and activity of the English and all their allies. I hope, however, that the capricious goddess will bestow some of her favors upon France and Spain, and a very few of them would do the work. If Rodney's fortune should convince Spain that she is attacking the bull by the horns, and France and Spain that the true system for conducting this war is by keeping just force enough in the channel to protect their coasts and their trade, and by sending all the rest of their ships into the American seas, it will be the best fortune for the allies they ever had.

I long to learn Mr. Jay's success at Madrid, and Mr. Laurens's arrival in Holland, where I will go to see him some time in the summer or autumn.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 14th, 1780.

Sir,

By a letter from London of the 3d of this month, received since my former of this day's date, I learn that the friends of the Ministry were in hopes every hour to hear that Clinton, who embarked seven thousand effective men (though they are said to be ten) in the latter end of December, is in possession of Charleston. The detachment consisted of the light infantry and grenadiers of the seventh, twenty-third, thirty-third, forty-second, sixty-third, and sixty-fourth British regiments, a legion of horse, yagers, four battalions of Hessian grenadiers; the New York volunteers, Ferguson's corps; one Hessian regiment, and a detachment of the seventy-first British regiment. Many are of opinion that a part of this army was intended for the

Windward Islands, and that they embarked and sailed the 26th of December, and was much hurt by a storm after sailing. Two thousand, under Lord Cornwallis, were said to be intended for the Chesapeake, to burn two or three men-of-war in James river, and to serve as a division to the other five, going against Charleston.

The friends of the Administration are not in spirits about the picture of affairs in America and the West Indies. They fear the French will have a superiority there, from whence some late accounts are arrived of vast sickness and disorder on board the English ships. The naval war will, to appearance, be removed for the next summer to that quarter. Rodney was to sail with four ships only to the West Indies; and Walsingham will not take more than that number as a convoy to about one hundred West Indiamen, which were to sail about the 20th of this month, and more ships-of-war would probably conduct this fleet off the land, and it was probable in the New York and Quebec trade about fifty vessels more would sail about the same time. That there was no talk of any troops or ships going to New York or Quebec. That there was a rumor that Wallace would have a small squadron, and carry four or five thousand men out; but this was not believed. That the Ministry had been hard pressed in several parliamentary questions lately; that their party was losing ground daily; that the county petitions for reformation were a heavy weight upon them; that it was likely there would be serious disturbances, if reforms do not take place; that the committees for each county have already appointed three deputies to meet and act for the whole, which is the beginning of a Congress, and will probably be soon called by that name; that it was hard to determine whether these movements at home, or the proceedings in Ireland, chagrin the Ministry most; that the sovereignty of England over Ireland will not be of many month's duration; that the armed associations in the latter amount to sixty-four thousand men, who seem determined to free themselves from every restriction that has been laid on them; that their Parliament is about putting an end to all appeals to England; to render the judges independent of the Crown, they at present holding their offices *durante bene placito*, and not *quamdiu se bene gesserunt*, as in England; to have a habeas corpus act; to repeal Poyning's law, which enacts that all bills shall originate in the Council, and not in the Commons; to confine the new supplies to the appointment of new duties only; to give bounties on their own

manufactures, and to have a mutiny bill, which last goes immediately to the grand point of jurisdiction.

That, however, notwithstanding all the present appearances against Great Britain, and the certainty of America's succeeding to her wish, there are not among even those who are called patriots in Parliament many who possess directly a wish for American independence; that Lords Camden, Effingham, Coventry, and the Bishop of St. Asaph are clearly and distinctly for it; Sir G. Saville, and but a few others in the House of Commons; that the rest of the patriots are for sovereignty; America to give up the French alliance, make up a federal alliance with England, by which, no doubt, they mean an alliance offensive and defensive, &c.

It is surely unnecessary for me to make any observations upon the absurdity of these provisoes, so injurious to the honor of our country and so destructive of her most essential rights and interests. By a letter of the 7th, a vessel, with two hundred Hessians or Yagers on board, has arrived at St. Ives, in Cornwall. She sailed with the expedition from New York the 26th of December, and a few days after received much damage in a storm, which, it is thought, separated and dispersed the fleet. This gives us great spirits, and sanguine hopes for Charleston. I have the honor to enclose several newspapers, and, with much respect, to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 14th, 1780.

Sir,

I have taken some pains to inform myself what number of regular troops the enemy have in the three Kingdoms, because we may form some judgment from this whether they will be able to send any, and what, reinforcements to North America or the West Indies. I am assured that they have not more than four thousand regular troops in Ireland, and these chiefly horse. It is not to be expected, then, I think, that they can spare any of these. There is too much danger even of popular commotions in England, Scotland, and Ireland, to spare many of these, if they were perfectly safe, or thought themselves so, from French and Spanish invasions. I have, however,

written to obtain more exact and authentic information, which I will not fail to transmit as early as possible.

I have received an account at length, both by the *Gazette Extraordinary* and by letter from London, that Admiral Digby is returned with the fleet and Spanish prizes from Gibraltar, and brought in with him the *Protée*, a French sixty-four-gun ship and three small store-ships, part of a fleet bound from L'Orient to the East Indies. The sixty-four-gun ship had about sixty-three thousands pounds in cash on board. This fleet was unlucky enough to fall in with Digby, on the 23d of February. Rodney sailed from Gibraltar on the 14th, and parted with Digby on the 18th, taking only four ships-of-the-line with him to the West Indies. A like number will probably go under Walsingham, about the 20th or 25th of this month, with the fleet to the West Indies. It is said in letters from London that, by every appearance, there are no more troops going to North America, and that it looks as if the Ministry mean not to continue the American war, but to let it dwindle and die away. If this should be the case, it is to be hoped that the Americans and their allies will not let it dwindle, but put it to death at a blow.

The Marquis de la Fayette and his brother, the Viscount de Noailles, a young noble officer, who is worthy of his family, and of the relation he bears to the Marquis, who I hope will be the bearer of this letter, will be able to say more upon this head. At present, the King and his general are the only persons who ought to know the secret.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

—o—

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Paris, March 16th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I have received, since my arrival here, your favor of the 16th of November, 1779. I shall take proper notice of your remarks upon the thirteenth and nineteenth articles of the treaty. They are both of them of importance, and, as to the last, I wish for an instruction upon it, because there is no doubt to be made that, whenever a serious negociation shall be commenced, great pains will be taken for the banished, although little attention is paid to them now. I learned, yesterday, that they have received no payment of their pensions

these eighteen months. The delay is colored with a pretence of waiting for some funds for Quebec, which have been stopped by the interruption of that trade. They are still bitter, as I am told, and are firmly persuaded that America cannot hold out six months longer.

You assure me that I shall not be without the orders and credit, which I mentioned in a letter of mine. I thank you for this assurance, which is conceived in such strong terms that one would think you did not expect any opposition to it; at least, an effectual opposition. I wish there may not be, but I am not without conjectures—I will not call them suspicions—upon this head. Denying them, however, would be virtually recalling me and Mr. Dana, and in a manner the most humiliating and disgraceful. Indeed, I do not know how we should get away from our creditors. You know what sort of minds cannot bear a brother near the throne; and so fair, so just, so economical a method, would not escape minds of so much penetration, as a refusal to lend money without orders. I am not sure, however, that the measure would be hazarded in the present circumstances by persons by whom I have been treated politely enough since my return.

I should be glad to know what the Board of Treasury have done with my accounts; whether they have passed upon them, or whether there are any objections to them, and what they are. I do not know but I was indiscreet in sending all my original vouchers, because if any of them should be lost, I might be puzzled to explain some things. However, I know by a letter from Mr. Gerry, that they were received, and I presume they will be preserved.

I wish to know your private opinion whether Congress will continue Mr. Dana and me here, at so much expense, with so little prospect of having any thing to do for a long time; an uncertain time, however; or whether they will revoke our powers, and recall us; or what they will do with us. A situation so idle and inactive is not agreeable to my genius; yet I can submit to it as well as any man, if it be thought necessary for the public good. I will do all the service I can, by transmitting intelligence and in every other way.

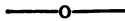
You must have observed that in all my public letters—and indeed in a great measure in my private ones—I have cautiously avoided giving accounts of the state of our affairs in France. I had many

reasons for this caution. In general, I was sure it would do no good, and I doubted the propriety of stating facts, and remarking upon characters, without giving notice of it to the persons concerned, and transmitting the evidence. There is no end of conceiving jealousies; but I am sure that officers of Government, especially foreign Ministers, ought not to attack and accuse one another upon jealousies, nor without full proof; nor then, without notifying the party to answer for himself.

Thus much let me say, however: that the present plan of having a distinct Minister in Spain, another in Holland, and another to treat with Great Britain, and having Secretaries independent of Ministers, is a good one. I pray you to stand by it with the utmost firmness, if it should be attacked or undermined. If you revoke the powers of a separate Minister to treat with the King of Great Britain, you ought to revoke the former powers of treating with all the Courts of Europe which were given to the Commissioners at Passy; for, under these, authority will be claimed of treating with the English, if my powers are revoked. The powers of treating with all other Courts ought to be separated from the mission.

Your friend, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 18th, 1780.

Sir,

We have this moment the news of the arrival of the convoy from St. Domingo, with sixty sail of merchant vessels, which is a great event for this country.

It is also reported that ten sail of Spanish ships-of-the-line, with ten battalions of land forces, have sailed; and their destination is supposed to be North America.

The armament preparing at Brest is thus described in one of the public papers: The Count du Chaffault de Besné, Lieutenant General of the naval forces in France, has taken leave of the King, being presented to his Majesty by M. de Sartine. The report runs that orders have been sent on the 29th of February for the officers who are at Paris to join their regiments upon the coasts by the 15th of March, and that eight regiments are to embark under the Count de Rochambeau. These regiments are that of *Anhalt*, whereof the



Marquis de Bergen is Colonel in second; *Auvergne*, Colonel Commandant the Viscount de Lavel; *Bourbonnois*, Colonel Commandant the Marquis de Laval, and in second, the Viscount de Rochambeau; *Neustrie*, Colonel Commandant the Count de Guibert, and in second, the Viscount le Veneur; *Romergne*, Colonel Commandant the Viscount de Custine, and in second, the Marquis du Ludec; *Royal Corse*, Colonel Commandant the Marquis du Luc, and in second, the Count of Pontevez; *Royal Deux Ponts*, Colonel Commandant the Count aux Ponts; *Saintongé*, Colonel Commandant the Viscount de Beranger, and in second, the Marquis de Themines. It is asserted that there will be added a detachment of artillery, and that the Baron de Viomenil, the Count de Chastellux, and the Count de Witgenstein will embark with these troops, and that the Duc de Lazun will have the command of a body of twelve hundred volunteers, and be joined to the armament under the Count de Rochambeau. All these troops, as it is believed, will embark at Brest, and go out under the convoy of the Count du Chaffault de Bresné.

They add that he will have more than thirty-seven ships-of-the-line under his command, destined for an expedition, whereof the genuine object is yet unknown. Many other regiments have also orders to march down nearer to those upon the sea-coast, and there are many vessels taken upon freight for the service of the King in the different ports of the Kingdom. The freight at Havre is thirty livres a ton, on condition that the owner furnish his vessel for twelve months. They say the Prince de Condé will go and command upon the coast of Brittany with the Count de Vaux.

By a letter I just now received from Holland, I am told that the grand business is done between the northern Powers on a footing very convenient for Holland, as it must compel the English to cease interrupting the trade of the neutral Powers. This would be more beneficial to France and Spain than to Holland, by facilitating the acquisition of ship-timber, hemp, and all other things for the supply of their arsenals of the marine. A principal branch of the British policy has ever been to prevent the growth of the navies of their enemies, by intercepting their supplies.

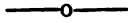
What gives further countenance to this letter, and the reports to the same purpose which have been some time circulated, is an article in the *Mercure de France*, enclosed. They talk of an alliance between Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Prussia, and the United

Province, for maintaining the honor of the flags of these Powers. Congress will see also another paragraph from London, which favors this idea ; that the Baron de Nolker, Envoy Extraordinary from Sweden, had declared that if the convoy of his nation was not released forthwith, with an indemnification for expenses and losses, he had orders to quit the Court of London in twenty-four hours.

Some other paragraphs seem to show the Dutch in earnest about equipping a respectable naval force of fifty-two vessels.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 19th, 1780.

Sir,

Enclosed is a paper of the 10th of March, which was accidentally omitted to be enclosed in the season of it.

There are two articles of intelligence which ought not to escape our observation, because they have relation to the armament equipping at Brest, although I do not suppose them of much consequence. The first is of a small squadron of frigates, which is said to have sailed from Portsmouth on the 28th of February, in consequence of orders sent from the Admiralty on the 22d, under the command of Captain Marshall, who is on board the Emerald, of thirty-two guns. The others are the Hussar of thirty-two, the Surprise of twenty-eight, the Squirrel, and Heart of Oak of twenty ; the sloops the Beaver's Prize, of fourteen, the Wolf, and the Wasp of eight, with the cutters the Nimble and the Griffin. It is thought that this little squadron is gone to make a cruise on the coast of France, to hinder the transports assembled in different ports from going out, or even to destroy them, if that shall be found to be possible. There is not, however, much to be dreaded from this squadron so near the neighborhood of Brest.

The other paragraph discovers the marks of more ingenuity and less truth. It is taken from the English papers, that Captain Jarvis in the Foudroyant, of eighty guns, who has been out upon a cruise, with a small division in the mouth of the channel, has returned to Plymouth and gone to Court, to be himself the bearer to Government of despatches of great importance, from the Court of France to Congress, found on board a sloop which on her passage to Phil-

adelphia fell into his hands. It is asserted, that these despatches contain an ample detail of the operations concerted between the Court of Versailles and Dr. Franklin, among which the most probable is the project of attacking Halifax, which is to be made by a body of troops from New England, and by a detachment of French troops very considerable by sea and land.

This moment a letter from London of the 10th of March informs me, that a packet boat is arrived from Jamaica, which sailed the 29th of January, with accounts that Fort Omoa is again in possession of Spain. That an English man-of-war has taken a Spanish ship-of-war, bound to South America with stores. She was pierced for sixty-four, but carried only fifty-two guns. The Jamaica fleet sailed on the 24th of January, convoyed slightly, with two fifties and two frigates, about forty merchantmen in all. Nothing yet from America, but it is generally believed that a storm has separated and dispersed Clinton's fleet, intended for the southern expedition.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 20th, 1780.

Sir,

I have at length received a parcel of English papers, which I have the honor to enclose with this to Congress. They are the *General Advertiser* and the *Morning Post*, both of which I shall for the future be able to transmit regularly every week. Congress will see that these papers are of opposite parties, one being manifestly devoted to the Court and the Ministry and the majority, the other to the opposition, the committees, the associations, and petitions; between both I hope Congress will be informed of the true facts.

There is the appearance of a piquancy and keenness in the temper of the opposite parties, by their writings and paragraphs in these papers that looks like the commencement of a serious quarrel.

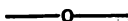
By the virulence of the manner in which such characters as Keppel, Howe, Burgoyne, Richmond, Shelburne, Rockingham, &c., are treated, it should seem that the Ministry were exasperated to a greater degree of rancor than ever, and that they were thoroughly alarmed and determined to throw the last die. Time and the events

of war will decide what will be the consequences of these heated passions.

By a conversation this morning with the Viscount de Noailles, I am led to fear that the fleet from Brest will not be able to put to sea before the 10th of April. This will be about the time the Marquis de la Fayette will arrive in America. He sailed from Rochelle the 13th of this month.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Paris, March 21st, 1780.

Sir,

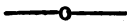
In the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 24th of February, your Excellency proposed that the principal object of my mission should be inserted in the Gazette of France, when it should make mention of my presentation to the King and all the royal family.

In the answer to this letter, which I had the honor to write on the 25th of February, I informed your Excellency that I should not think myself at liberty to make any publication of my powers to treat of peace until they should have been announced in the Gazette. It was on the 7th of March that I had the honor to be presented to the King and royal family, but no notice has been taken of it in the Gazette of France. Whether the omission is accidental, or whether it is owing to any alteration in your Excellency's sentiments, I am not able to determine.

Your Excellency will excuse the trouble I give you on this occasion, as it arises wholly from a desire to be able at all times to render an account to my sovereign of the motives and reasons of my own conduct.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO WILLIAM LEE.

Paris, March 21st, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I have just received your favor from Brussels of the 17th of this month, and I thank you for this instance of your attention to me.

Considering the state of Ireland and the spirit that seems to be rising in England, which has already attained such a height as to baffle the Minister and the East India Company, and to carry many votes in the House of Commons almost to a balance with him, and even some against him, I should not be at all surprised, if terms, such as you mention, should be offered to America; nor should I be surprised if another rumor, which was propagated at the Palais Royal this day, should prove true, that a great change is made or to be made in the Ministry, and that the Lords Shelburne and Rockingham, Burke, &c., are in. Yet I have no proper accounts of either.

Whatever may be my powers or instructions, or whether I have any or not, I am very much obliged to you for your sentiments on such a proposition as a truce for America, supposing it should be made. Your arguments are of great weight, and will undoubtedly be attended to by every one, whoever he may be, who shall be called to give an opinion upon such a great question. You will not expect me at present to give, if it is proper for me even to form any decided opinion upon it. Yet thus much I may venture to say, that having had so long an experience of the policy of our enemies, I am persuaded, from the whole of it, if they propose a truce, it will not be with an expectation or desire that America should accept it, but merely to try one experiment more to deceive, divide, and seduce, in order to govern.

You observe that the heads of some well-intentioned, though visionary, Americans run much upon a truce. I have seen and heard enough to be long since convinced that the Americans in Europe are by no means an adequate representation of those on the other side of the water. They neither feel nor reason like them in general. I should, therefore, upon all occasions hear their arguments with attention, weigh them with care, but be sure never to follow them when I knew them to differ from the body of their countrymen at home.

You say the Dutch are disturbed. Do you wonder at it? They have been kicked by the English as no reasonable man would kick a dog. They have been whipped by them as no sober postillion would whip a hackney coach horse. Can they submit to all this upon any principle which would not oblige them to submit if the English were to bombard Amsterdam or cut away their dikes?

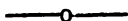
I wish I knew the name of the principle confidant and director of the Prince, whom you mention.

I am very anxious to hear of the arrival of Mr. Laurens, but suspect you will learn it first. Mr. Dana returns his respects to you.

I thank you, sir, for your offers of service; nothing can oblige me more than to communicate to me any intelligence of the designs of our enemies, in politics or war, and their real and pretended forces by sea and land. Pray, what is the foundation of the story of a quintuple alliance between Holland, Sweden, Russia, Prussia, and Denmark?

I am, sir, with great esteem, your humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 23d, 1780.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose the English papers of the 11th, 13th, and 14th of March, the *Courrier de l'Europe*, and the Hague, Leyden, and Amsterdam gazettes. We are in hourly expectation of great news from Holland, Ireland, England, Spain, and, above all, from America and the West Indies. I have not had a letter from America since I left it, except one from my family, of the 10th of December; and, indeed, although several vessels have arrived, I can hear of no letters or news.

By the English papers Congress will perceive the violent fermentation in England, which has arisen to such a height as to produce a Congress in fact, and it will soon be so in name. The proceedings in the House of Commons on the 14th, which were terminated by a resolution of the Committee of the Whole House to abolish the Board of Trade and Plantations, carried against the Ministry, after a very long and warm debate, by a majority of eight voices, is not only the most extraordinary vote which has passed in the present reign, but it tends to very extensive consequences.

I believe it is very true, that this board has been the true cause of the quarrel of Great Britain against the Colonies, and therefore may be considered as an object of national resentment, but a resentment of this kind alone would not probably have produced this effect.

Whether it is the near approach of an election that has intimidated

the members of the House of Commons, or whether committees, petitions, associations, and Congress have alarmed them, or whether the nation is convinced that America is indeed lost forever, and consequently the Board of Trade would be useless, I do not know. Be this as it may, the English nation, and even the Irish and Scotch nations, and all parts of the world, will draw this inference from it, that even in the opinion of the House of Commons America is lost. The free and virtuous citizens of America, and even the slavish and vicious, if there are any still remaining of this character, under the denomination of Tories, must be convinced by this vote, passed in the hey-day of their joy for the successes of Admiral Rodney's fleet, that the House of Commons despaired of ever regaining America. The nations subject to the house of Bourbon cannot fail to put the same interpretation upon this transaction.

Holland and all the northern Powers, with the Empress of Russia at their head, who are all greatly irritated against England for their late violences against the innocent commerce of neutral Powers, will draw the same consequences. The politicians of Great Britain are too enlightened in the history of nations and the rise and progress of causes and effects in the political world, not to see that all these bodies of people will, in consequence of this vote, consider the Colonies given up as lost by the House of Commons, and they are too well instructed not to know the important consequences that follow, from having such points as those thus settled among the nations. I cannot, therefore, but consider this vote, and the other respecting the Secretary of State for the American Department, which arose almost to a balance, as a decided declaration of the sense of the nation. The first consequence of it probably will be one further attempt, by offering some specious terms which they know we cannot, in justice, in honor, in conscience, accept, to deceive, seduce, and divide America, throw all into confusion there, and, by this means, gaining an opportunity to govern. There is nothing more astonishing than the inconsistencies of the patriots in England. Those who are most violent against the Ministry are not for making peace with France and Spain, but they would wish to allure America into a separate peace, and persuade her to join them against the house of Bourbon. One would think it impossible that one man of sense in the world could seriously believe that we could thus basely violate our truth, thus unreasonably quarrel with our best friends,

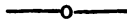
thus madly attach ourselves to our belligerent enemies. But thus it is.

Sir George Saville threw out in the House that he wished to carry home to his constituents the news of an accommodation with America; and Mr. David Hartley has given notice of his intentions to make a motion relative to us. But I confess I have no expectations. Mr. Hartley's motions and speeches have never made any great fortune in the House, nor been much attended to; from whence I conclude, if the present great leaders, even of opposition in the House, were seriously disposed to do any thing towards a pacification, which we could attend to, they would not suffer Mr. Hartley to have the honor of making the motion.

The heads of many people run upon a truce with America, and Mr. Hartley's motion may tend this way; but a truce with America cannot be made without a peace with France and Spain, and would America accept of such a truce? Give Great Britain time to encroach and fortify upon all our frontiers? To send enemies into the States, and sow the seeds of discord? To rise out of her present exhausted condition? Suffer France and Spain to relax? Wait for alterations by the death of princes, or the changes in the characters of princes or Ministers in Europe? I ask these questions that Congress may give me instructions, if necessary. At present I do not believe my powers are sufficient to agree to a truce, if it was proposed; nor do I believe it would be for our interests or safety to agree to it, if I had. I do not mean, however, to give any decided opinion upon such a great question in this hasty letter; I am open to conviction, and shall obey the instructions of Congress with the most perfect respect.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 24th, 1780.

Sir,

Mr. Burke's bill not being as yet public, we are not yet informed of the items of it. But as it already appears that it strikes at the Department of Secretary of State for America, and at the Board of Trade, there seems to be little reason to doubt that it goes further,

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and strikes at the American Board of Commissioners, at all the American Judges of Admiralty, Governors of Provinces, Secretaries, and custom-house officers of all denominations. At least, if this should not be found to be a part of the bill, there are stronger reasons, if possible, for abolishing this whole system of iniquity, together with all the pensions granted to the refugees from America, than even for taking away the Board of Trade. And from several late paragraphs in the papers, and from Mr. Fox's severe observations in the House of Commons upon Governor Hutchinson, calling him in substance the "firebrand that lighted up all the fire between the two countries," it seems pretty clear that it is in contemplation to take away all these salaries and pensions.

If such a measure should take place, exiled as these persons are from the country which gave them birth, but which they have most ungratefully endeavored to enslave, they will become melancholy monuments of Divine vengeance against such unnatural and impious behavior. Nevertheless, as these persons are numerous, and have some friends in England as well as in America, where they had once much property, there is a probability, I think, that whenever or wherever negotiations for peace may be commenced, they and their estates, now almost universally confiscated, will not be forgotten. But much pains and art will be employed to stipulate for them in the treaty both a restoration of their property and a right to return as citizens of the States to which they formerly belonged. It is very possible, however, that before the treaty shall be made, or even negotiations commenced, these gentlemen will become so unpopular and odious that the people of England would be pleased with their sufferings and punishment. But it is most probable that the Court will not abandon them very easily.

I should, therefore, be very happy to have the explicit instructions of Congress upon this head, whether I am to agree, in any case whatsoever, to an article which shall admit of their return, or the restoration of their forfeited estates. There are sentiments of humanity and forgiveness which plead on one side, there are reasons of State and political motives (among which the danger of admitting such mischievous persons as citizens is not the least considerable) which argue on the other.

I shall obey the instructions of Congress with the utmost pleasure; or if, for any reasons, they choose to leave it at discretion, if I ever

should have the opportunity, I shall determine it without listening to any passions of my own of compassion or resentment, according to my best judgment of the public good. There is another point of very great importance, which I am persuaded will be aimed at by the English Ministers—I am sure it will by the people of England—whenever times of peace shall be talked of. For facilitating the return of commerce, they will wish to have it stipulated by the treaty that the subjects of Great Britain shall have the rights of citizens in America, and the citizens of the United States the rights of subjects in the British dominions. Some of the consequences of such an agreement to them and to us are obvious, and very important; but they are so numerous that it is difficult to determine whether so great a question should be left to my determination. If, however, contrary to my inclinations, it should fall to my lot to decide it without instructions, it shall be decided according to my conscience, and the best lights I have.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 24th, 1780.

Sir,

It has been observed in former letters that there is scarcely an example of such a series of fortunate incidents as that which happened to Rodney's fleet; and it may be proper to dilate a little upon some of these incidents, to show that the enthusiastic applause which is given him by the Court, the Lords, the Commons, and the city of London, is no otherwise merited than by the boldness of his enterprise, unless simple good fortune is merit.

It must be allowed that it was a desperate plan in the Minister to order him out on the design to succor Gibraltar; and it was a desperate resolution in him to undertake it; because he had to expect to meet with the whole Spanish squadron at Cadiz, and that it would follow him, which was in fact the case.

Don Gaston sailed from Brest the 13th of January in search of Admiral Rodney, with twenty Spanish ships-of-the-line, with four French ships-of-the-line—the Glorieux, the Burgundy, the Zodiac,

and the *Scipio*—with the frigate the *Nereis*, under the Chef d'Escadre the Chevalier de Bousset. If the four and twenty ships of-the-line had joined Don Langara's squadron, there is scarce a possibility of doubt, after the brave defence made by him with such inferior force, that Rodney's fleet would have been totally ruined, and consequently Gibraltar reduced to extremities. But this was not to happen. The next day after Don Gaston sailed from Brest, he met with a terrible storm, which separated his fleet. Two of his Spanish ships arrived at Cadiz the 31st of January, the *Serious* and the *Atlant*, each of seventy guns. The 3d of February there arrived twelve others: the *Rayo*, commanded by Don Gaston, and the *St. Louis*, both of eighty guns; the *Velasco*, the *St. Francis de Paule*, the *S. Isabella*, the *S. Joachim*, the *St. Peter*, the *St. Damase*, the *Arrogant*, and the *Warrior*, all of seventy; the *Mink* of fifty-six, and the frigates the *Assumption* and the *Emerald*, with the French division under the Chevalier de Bousset, excepting the *Scipio*, commanded by the Baron de Durfort, which did not arrive until the 17th of February, after having cruised ten or twelve days off *St. Vincent*, which had been appointed as the place of rendezvous and reunion, in case of separation. The *Guardian Angel*, of seventy guns, which was also separated from the squadron, did not arrive till several days after Don Gaston at Cadiz, having suffered very much, as well as all the other vessels, in their masts and rigging, by the bad weather, and especially by the violent gale of wind which they met with on the 1st of February, near the Cape of *St. Vincent*. Of the five remaining Spanish vessels, four went into Ferrol: the *St. Vincent Ferries*, of eighty guns, commanded by Don d'Acre, Lieutenant General; the *St. Charles* of eighty, the *Vengeur* of seventy, and the *Septentrion* of sixty; the fifth, named the *St. Joseph*, of seventy, by Don Orsorno, Chef d'Escadre, returned to Brest dismasted. This separation and dispersion of the fleet, and of its principal officers, exposed Langara, and made Rodney's fortune; and the necessity these vessels were in of reparation gave liberty to the English fleet to put to sea from Gibraltar, and regain the Atlantic ocean, on the 13th of February, to the number of twenty-two ships-of-the-line, including those of Rodney, Digby, and Ross, and four of the vessels taken from the Spaniards, and three frigates, with twelve merchant ships under their convoy, leaving at Gibraltar the *Edgar* of seventy-four, the *Panther*

of sixty, which has been there a long time, and the Guipuscoa of sixty-four guns, taken from the Spaniards on the 8th of January, with twenty-four merchant vessels under her convoy.

There has been much conversation for several days concerning a Spanish armament preparing at Cadiz, and letters from Carthagena say, that the regiment of infantry called the Flankers' regiment, which has been in garrison in that city, has been completed by orders from the Court of Naples, and on the 1st of March the first battalion marched for Cadiz, and on the 4th of March the second battalion. It is said that this regiment is to embark with several others, which from different garrisons have arrived at the same place for America, in all parts of which, according to appearances, the English will have enough to do to maintain their ground this ensuing campaign.

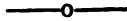
In Ireland, on the 22d of February, an assembly of the gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders of the city of Dublin, resolved unanimously that the advantages obtained in commerce are neither complete nor solidly established; that the sense of the nation is, that the Irish Parliament alone, in concert with the Sovereign, can give to the laws already obtained of the Prince their obligatory force; that what has been done ought not to be considered as any thing more than a great beginning; and that the general hope was that the end of the session would be as advantageous to the political constitution of the country as the commencement of it had been favorable to commerce; that the fathers of the country are particularly requested and instructed to obtain a declaratory act, which may preserve forever the free and independent state of Ireland, and by introducing some necessary modifications of Poyning's law, to prevent in future all controversy between the King and the Parliament of Ireland, concerning fundamental laws.

These instructions were given by the sheriffs to the representatives of Dublin, who answered that they were convinced that no foreign legislative power whatsoever had any right, or ought to arrogate to itself any authority over their nation, and without injuring the legal and known authority which his Majesty has a right to exercise over this Kingdom in a manner conformable to the laws, they would neglect nothing to obtain an act, which should take away every unjust restriction, and which should tend to assure the constitutional independence of the Kingdom. This is said to be the general sense

of the whole Kingdom, so that it may truly be said that the British empire is crumbling to pieces like a rope of sand, insomuch, that if the war should continue, I shall not be at all surprised if even Scotland should become discontented with the union, and the disputes between the Ministry and the East India Company should terminate in the independence of Asia; nay, it would be no miracle if the West India Islands should request the protection of France and Spain, or the United States. I will take the first opportunity to write upon the subject of Lord North's loan, which, together with the other ways and means, amounts to the amazing sum of £20,674,000 sterling.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 26th, 1780.

Sir,

On the 2d day of March the news of the Royal consent to the bill, which the British Parliament has passed for granting to Ireland a free commerce with the American Colonies, the West Indies, and the coast of Africa, was celebrated in Dublin by public rejoicings; the guns of the Lark were discharged, the garrison made a *feu de joie*, the Castle and other public buildings were illuminated as well as some private houses. The Government were probably encouraged to these demonstrations of joy by the motion, which was made the day before, that is, the 1st of March, by Mr. Dennis Doly in the House of Commons, for an address of thanks to the King, to which both parties unanimously consented, not excepting the principal patriots, such as Mr. Ogle, Mr. Hussy Burgh, and Mr. Grattan.

The address contains an assurance of their attachment to the royal person and Government of the King; a profession of gratitude for his Majesty's uninterrupted attention to the interest of Ireland, and for the happy alteration which the wisdom of his councils, and the liberal sentiments of the British Parliament have effected in the situation of their affairs. They express a double satisfaction for the benefits which have been granted them, because they appear to them to be an efficacious remedy for the poverty of that country, and because they furnish an unquestionable proof of that fraternal

affection which they think they have a right to expect from Great Britain, and which they will constantly endeavor to cultivate and augment to the most perfect degree of mutual confidence. They profess the sincerest pleasure in finding that the ties which have ever united the two Kingdoms have been bound faster than ever by the conduct of their fellow subjects; and they assure his Majesty that on their part they will never fail to make the greatest efforts for the maintenance of that close connexion between the two Kingdoms, which they firmly believe to be inseparable from their happiness and prosperity.

The next day the House of Peers, even at the motion of the Duke of Leinster, followed the example of the House of Commons. Their address is in substance the same, with this addition, that the benefits received afford a remedy proportioned to their distress, and that they will discountenance with all their power all attempts that deluded men might make to excite ill-founded apprehensions in the people, and to turn their attention to the commerce which has been granted them in a manner so extensive.

To these additions, however, there was an opposition, and finally a protest, signed by Lord Carrisford, the Earls of Charlemont and Arran, and the Viscounts Powerscourt and Mountmorris, and by the proxies of the Earl Moira, and the Lords Eyre and Irlham.

The Duke of Leinster, however, has brought upon his reputation by this motion suspicions all over Europe that he has been gained by the King, which a little time and his future conduct will either dissipate or confirm.

The next day Parliament adjourned to the 11th of April. Congress will be able to put a just interpretation upon these addresses by the account I gave in my last of the instructions of the city of Dublin to their representatives, and their answer, as well as by those of the county of Dublin, which remain to be communicated. On the 7th of March there was held at Kilmainham an assembly of the freeholders of the county of Dublin, when the following instructions to their representatives were agreed on:

“We, your constituents, desiring to acknowledge, as we ought, the advantages our commerce will derive from the particular attention which his Majesty has given it, from the integrity of our Parliament, the firmness of our countrymen, and the justice which the English nation begins to render us, we declare to you that what follows is

the principal cause of our joy upon this occasion. It appears to us that the desire of monopolizing commerce was the only motive which could make England imagine that she had a right to usurp a legitimate authority over this Kingdom, and from the moment when she renounced this monopoly, she has taken away the principal obstacle which opposed our liberty, and consequently the British nation will not continue to itself an arbitrary power, from which she can derive nothing but reducing this Kingdom to slavery. We desire to know, moreover, whether the united efforts of the Parliament and people of Ireland ought to confine themselves, so as to leave this island in a state of dependence and submission to laws, to which the nation has never consented, to laws dictated by a Parliament in which she has no representatives? Let it not be said this power attributed to the English Parliament is chimerical. We may see the proofs of it even in the repeal of several of the acts and in this, that several persons declare, however falsely, that this power is founded upon law. Having an equal right to political liberty and to commerce, but deprived of both, and nevertheless content to be restored to the enjoyment of a free commerce alone, will it not appear that we absolutely give up the former? This idea would be absurd. It is, then, our duty to declare to the universe that we are of right a free nation, not to be subjected to any laws but such as are made by the King and Parliament of Ireland.

“Desirous of nothing so much as to live always in good intelligence with the British nation, on account of the union of the two Crowns, our instructions are, that you shall make the greatest efforts to obtain an act which shall establish forever the independence of the legislative power of Ireland. We wish, moreover, that you would endeavor to qualify Poyning’s law, by taking away from the Privy Council the legislative power. In accomplishing these important objects, you will acquire honor to yourselves and give satisfaction to the nation.

“It is not to be doubted that you will also fall upon some plan of economy, by making savings, which are become necessary to increase the revenue of the Crown and improve the commerce of the nation.”

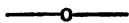
It seems now very plain that the Irish nation aspires to an independence of Great Britain the most unlimited, and acknowledges no other connexion with her but that of affection and subjection to the

same King. The troops already raised by associations amount to between sixty and seventy thousand men, which are to be forthwith augmented by ten thousand more, who are to be formed of countrymen; each officer is to furnish four, who will be clothed and paid out of the funds that each regiment will establish for this purpose. The principal objects of these armed associations are said to be a free and unlimited commerce to all parts of the world, except only the East Indies. The repeal of Poyning's law, passed under Henry the Seventh, and another under George the First, which restrains the legislative authority of the Irish Parliament, with an express clause that the Parliament of Ireland ought, and shall be forever and wholly exempt from all kind of control and dependence of the British Parliament, in all cases whatsoever. That students shall no longer be obliged to go to the Temple in London and other seminaries in England to study law. But in future they shall study in the University of Dublin, under proper professors, and shall be admitted to the bar in Ireland by the Lord Chancellor and the other judges, after a proper examination; the judges to be natives, except the Chancellor; the bishops also to be natives.

In the mean time, the slightest circumstances may blow up the flames of war between the two Kingdoms, which would have been done some weeks ago if the regular officers of the King's troops had not given way to the Dublin volunteers.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, March 29th, 1780.

Sir,

I think it my duty to lay before Congress what may occur in Holland relative to the present war, at least until the arrival of Mr. Laurens, whose presence is much desired there. Many appearances make it probable that the grasping and vindictive temper of the English will compel the Republic into the war. If they do take a part it is very certain it will be against England. As plunder and revenge are the present ruling passions of the English, it is probable that a war with Holland is rather wished for than otherwise, because the Ministry and their principal supporters seem to have no idea that



it is possible to make things worse, and all the plunder they can get will be so much clear gain. The Dutch are so much alarmed and aroused that it is very certain the Prince finds it necessary to give out that he has been deceived by the English, that he has changed his sentiments, and that he will promote with all his influence unlimited convoys. It is certain that they are fitting their men-of-war with a great deal of activity, and it is confidently affirmed that they have made a treaty with Russia and Sweden, who are to make a common cause. The States of the Province of Friesland have come to a resolution that it was certain Byland was not the aggressor, but that Fielding had not hesitated to make use of force to visit the Dutch ships under convoy, to stop those that were loaded with hemp, and to insult the flag of the Republic. That this proceeding shows that the complaisance hitherto shown to England, in depriving the ships loaded with masts and ship timber of the protection of the State, in leaving them to sail alone and without convoy, has had no effects, and consequently the States judge that a similar condescension ought no longer to take place, but, on the contrary, all merchandise whatsoever, which the treaties do not expressly declare to be contraband, ought, without the least difficulty, to be admitted under convoy and enjoy the protection of the State, and to this effect his Most Serene Highness ought to be requested to give orders to the commanders of the men-of-war and of the squadron of the Republic to protect, as heretofore, all merchandise.

This resolution was taken the 29th of February, and laid before the States-General, who, after debating upon it, determined to require the deputies of the other Provinces to obtain, as soon as possible, the decision of their Provinces upon the same subject. These two Provinces, Holland and Friesland, have already decided for unlimited convoys.

Sir Joseph Yorke, on the 21st of March instant, laid before their High Mightinesses another memorial, insisting on the aid which he had demanded before, upon condition, in case of refusal, that his master would, after three months, consider all treaties between the two countries as null, and in which he contends that the protection afforded to Captain Jones, whom he calls a pirate, in the Texel and in Amsterdam, was a violation of the treaties.

In order more clearly to comprehend the dispute between Great Britain and the States-General, it may not be amiss to observe, that

by the marine treaty between the two Powers, concluded at the Hague, in 1667, all the subjects and inhabitants of the United Provinces may, with all safety and freedom, sail and traffic in all the kingdoms, countries, and estates, which are, or shall be in peace, amity, or neutrality with the States-General, without any hinderance or molestation from the ships-of-war, gallies, frigates, barques, or other vessels belonging to the King of Great Britain, or any of his subjects, upon occasion or account of any war, which may hereafter happen between the King of Great Britain and the above said kingdoms, countries, and estates, or any of them, which are, or shall be, in peace, amity, or neutrality with the States-General ; and this freedom of navigation and commerce shall extend to all sorts of merchandize, excepting contraband goods. That this term of contraband goods, is to be understood to comprehend all sorts of fire-arms, their appurtenances, and all other utensils of war called in French, "*servans à l'usage de la guerre,*" and that under this head of contraband goods, these following shall not be comprehended: corn, wheat, or other grain, pulse, oils, wine, salt, or generally any thing that belongs to the nourishment or sustenance of life, but they shall remain free, as likewise all other merchandize and commodities not comprehended in the foregoing article, and the transportation of them shall be permitted even into places at enmity with Great Britain, except such places are besieged, blocked up, or invested. Masts, yards, ship-timber, and hemp, the articles now in dispute, are not contraband by this treaty, or by the law of nations. Yet Great Britain, in the hours of her insolence and madness, which are not yet at an end, makes no scruple to seize, condemn, and confiscate them. She pretends, that as the Dutch refuse to her the aid she demands by treaty, she has a right to seize upon masts, timber, and hemp, which are not prohibited by treaty. Not to enter into the enquiry, whether the present case is such, as by the treaties obliges the Dutch to furnish her aid, but admitting for argument's sake it is so, yet the consequences will not follow. It would only follow that Great Britain was absolved from the obligation of the treaty, not by any means that she is discharged from the obligations of the law of nations.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

## COUNT DE VERGENNES TO JOHN ADAMS.

## Translation.

Versailles, March 30th, 1780.

Sir,

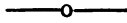
I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write on the 21st instant. I remember very well to have said to you, that your presentation should be inserted in the Gazette of France ; but, from the information I have since obtained, it seems that the presentations, whether of Ambassadors or Ministers Plenipotentiary, are not thus announced in our Gazette, and it would have the appearance of affectation to insert yours. As a substitute, I will have it mentioned, if you wish, in the *Mercure de France*, and you can take measures to have the notice repeated in the foreign gazettes.

I have the honor to be, &amp;c.,

DE VERGENNES.

P. S. I enclose a draft of an article, which I propose to send to the *Mercure de France*. It will not be sent till I learn your opinion of it.

“Mr. Adams, whom the Congress of the United States has designated to assist at the conferences for a peace, when that event shall take place, arrived here some time ago, and has had the honor to be presented to the King and the royal family.”



## TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Paris, March 30th, 1780.

Sir,

I have the honor of your Excellency's letter of this day, in answer to mine of the 21st of this month. Until the receipt of it, I had taken it for granted, that the presentation of every Ambassador was regularly inserted in the Gazette of France, and until very lately, several days since the date of my letter to your Excellency of the 21st of this month, I had supposed that the presentation of Ministers Plenipotentiary was constantly inserted likewise.

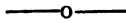
The information your Excellency has given me, that the presentation of neither Ambassadors nor Ministers Plenipotentiary have ever

been inserted, has perfectly satisfied me, and I doubt not will equally satisfy my countrymen, who have heretofore been under the same mistake with myself.

I approve very much of your Excellency's proposition of inserting my presentation in the *Mercury of France*, and shall take measures to have it repeated in the foreign gazettes.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Sir,

Paris, March 30th, 1780.

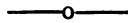
I have the honor to enclose to Congress copies of certain letters which I have had the honor to write to the Count de Vergennes, and others which I have received from him.

It seems that the presentations of the American Commissioners and Ministers Plenipotentiary have not been inserted in the *Gazette*, which occasioned some uneasiness in the minds of some of our countrymen, as they thought it a neglect of us, and a distinction between our sovereign and others. The enclosed letters will explain this matter and show that no distinction has been made between the representatives of the United States and those of other Powers.

I ought to confess to Congress that the delicacy of the Count de Vergennes about communicating my powers is not perfectly consonant to my manner of thinking, and if I had followed my own judgment I should have pursued a bolder plan by communicating, immediately after my arrival, to Lord George Germain my full powers to treat both of peace and commerce; but I hope Congress will approve of my communicating first to this Court my destination, and asking their advice, and then pursuing it, because I think no doubt can be made that it is my duty to conduct my negotiations at present in concert with our ally, as I have hitherto done.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Sir,

Paris, March 30th, 1780.

There is an anecdote which causes a great speculation at present,

because it is supposed to show the tendency of things in Ireland, and what is to be expected by Great Britain if the Ministry should oppose themselves to the wishes of the Irish nation. On the 23d of February, three bodies of volunteers, those of Dublin, commanded by Colonel John Allen, those of the Liberties, commanded by Sir Edward Newingham, and another body commanded by Mr. Taylor, assembled at the Exchange, from whence they made a long march in a circuit of four miles, accompanied with other volunteers on horseback, to the Park, the avenues of which were guarded by five other corps of volunteers. There they went through the manœuvres and firings with as much celerity and precision as any regular troops. They were there reviewed by the Duke of Leinster, as General and Commander-in-Chief, accompanied with four aids-de-camp, and they all rendered to this nobleman military honors almost equal to those which are rendered to a King.

Returning from the review the volunteers met in Barrack street a detachment of the royal troops marching to the Castle. These required that the volunteers should turn out of the way, and endeavored to break their ranks; but the volunteers, with their bayonets fixed and charged, stood their ground and discovered such a resolution, that the commanding officer of the King's troops ordered them to halt, and desired to speak with the Duke of Leinster. They entered into a conference. The regular troops pretended they had a right to the pavements as the troops of the King. The volunteers thought they had a right to keep it as free citizens, voluntarily armed for the defence of their country, and consequently superior to mere mercenaries. They supported these arguments by preparations for battle; the people declared themselves in favor of the volunteers by collecting together a sufficient quantity of stones to overwhelm the troops, who at last gave way in order to avoid a scene of blood. The next day the volunteers sent to the Viceroy an excuse, but couched in terms which justified their conduct as necessary to maintain the liberty, independence, and dignity of the nation. I have seen so much of the spirit of the King's troops in several contests between them and the citizens of Boston, as to know very well what all this means. The volunteers must have great confidence in their own strength, and the King's troops equal diffidence of theirs before an altercation of this kind could terminate in this manner.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ARTHUR LEE, AT L'ORIENT.

Paris, March 31st, 1780.

Sir,

I have received yours of the 26th, and that of the 15th of this month. I enclose a copy of the letter you desire.

M. Garnier is gone into the country, and I have not seen him since I arrived here. Mr. Izard, however, has seen him, and will give you a satisfactory account of what he says.

If I were to apply to the other gentleman you know what would be the consequence. It would fly very soon to, you know where, and I should have only the credit of meddling unnecessarily with disputes, which I have kept out of as much as I could, and which it is certainly now the public interest, and consequently my duty to keep out of as much as I can. I had, therefore, rather be excused. The gentleman himself would probably give you the same answer to a letter from you directly to him as he would give to me, unless I should use arts with him, which would be unworthy of you, as well as of me, and which I cannot use with any body.

I shall have enough to do to steer my little bark among the rocks and shoals. I shall have perplexities enough of my own, which I cannot avoid, and dangers too. These I shall meet with a steady mind, and perhaps none of them will be greater than that, which I think my duty, of avoiding things that do not belong to me.

Scarcely ever any Minister executed a commission for making a peace, without ruining his own reputation, in a free Government. No Minister that ever existed had a more difficult and dangerous peace to make than I have.

The gentleman you mention has hitherto been very still, but he has been well received by all that I have learnt.

Adieu,

JOHN ADAMS.

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 TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 3d, 1780.

Sir,

The Prince of Orange, Stadtholder, is not only supposed to have ambitious views of allying his family to that of Great Britain, but is very much influenced by the Duke of Brunswick, who is a field

marshal and commander-in-chief of the Dutch land forces, who is also a brother of Prince Ferdinand. The Duke is not upon the best terms with his family, because they think he is too much attached to the House of Austria. By this double attraction of England on one side, and their old friends the House of Austria on the other, it is not very surprising that his Most Serene Highness is drawn a little aside from the line of the American cause, which is now so closely connected, and likely to be more so, with the House of Bourbon. Hence it is said that the Count de Byland is to be honorably acquitted by the court-martial, and hence the embarrassments the Dutch are under in their wishes to resent like men the unparalleled injuries that have been done them by the English. There is, however, so much spirit in the United Provinces as to oblige the Prince to put on the appearance of resentment at the insults offered to his flag, and to oblige the British Minister to assume the tone of menace in order to work upon the fears of the people whose property is so exposed as to make them dread a war with any nation whatever.

Congress will, however, be able to judge of what is doing in Holland by the following proceedings. A petition was presented to their High Mightinesses on the 25th of February for the equipment of fifty-two ships-of-war, in the following terms:

“Your High Mightinesses having thought proper, by your resolution of the 17th of this month, which came to us the 22d, to require us to present to your High Mightinesses, without influencing, however, in any thing the deliberations of the confederates, a petition for the sum of two million six hundred and twenty thousand five hundred and ninety-eight florins, to assist toward the one half of the necessary expense for an extraordinary equipment of fifty-two vessels-of-war and frigates, which are to be put in a condition of service by the 1st of May, as well as of other articles more fully particularized in the report contained in the resolution of your High Mightinesses, and in the estimate enclosed with it, which, we flatter ourselves, were made with all possible accuracy, while the funds necessary for the half of the equipment abovementioned will be found in the produce of certain duties.

“We have been the more zealous not to delay giving satisfaction to the requisition of your High Mightinesses, as we consider the said plan as tending to accomplish what has been for so many years

represented and advised, as well by his Serene Highness as by us, in general petitions addressed successively to your High Mightinesses, as well as to the confederates; that is to say, to put the Republic in a more respectable state of defence by augmenting her marine and troops, an object upon which it has been again insisted in the petition of the current year, which employed such reasons and such urgent motives to this purpose, that expressions now fail us for adding any thing to what has been already said; and persuaded, moreover, as we are, that the circumstances and facts, such of them as have passed in a manner so remarkable, render useless and superfluous all further reasonings in such sort, that all these details, being already perfectly understood, as well by your High Mightinesses, as by the confederates, we think we may depend upon this knowledge in expectation of the definitive resolutions of your High Mightinesses, equally salutary and unanimous, and the effect of which will be to prevent and ward off the new misfortunes which may threaten the Republic; assured, moreover, and persuaded that the serious intention of the confederates is to accomplish the equipment proposed, with all that depends upon it, and that to this end their High Mightinesses will be pleased, not only to give their consent to the petition of two millions six hundred and twenty thousand five hundred and ninety-eight florins, formed by the present, but also, what is more important, to furnish, as soon as possible, their quota to the general treasury, by which means the colleges of the Admiralty, whose duty it is to attend to the equipments, may be possessed of the means necessary to this operation at convenient periods, which will be thought more indispensably necessary on casting an eye on the reasons more amply alleged in the report of the colleges of Admiralty, and expressed in the resolution of your High Mightinesses the 17th of February, to which we refer."

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*Memorial.*

On the 21st of March, 1780, Sir Joseph Yorke, the British Ambassador, presented a memorial to their High Mightinesses of the following tenor:

"High and Mighty Lords,

"The King, my master, has always cultivated the friendship of

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your High Mightinesses, and has always considered the alliance which has so long subsisted between the two nations as founded upon the wisest principles, and as essential to their mutual prosperity. The principal objects of this alliance, which stands upon the immovable basis of a common interest, are the safety and prosperity of the two States, the maintenance of the public tranquillity, and the preservation of that just balance so often disturbed by the ambitious policy of the House of Bourbon. When the Court of Versailles, in direct violation of the public faith and of the common rights of sovereigns, had broken the peace by a league made with the rebel subjects of his Majesty, avowed and declared formally by the Marquis de Noailles; when, by immense preparations, France manifested her designs of annihilating the maritime power of England, the King expected that your High Mightinesses, too enlightened not to see that the safety of the Republic is closely connected with that of Great Britain, would have been zealous to come to his assistance. One of the first cares of his Majesty was to inform your High Mightinesses of all the circumstances of this unjust war; and in the critical situation in which the King found himself he did not forget the interests of his ancient allies; but, on the contrary, has shown the most sincere desire to favor the commerce and the free navigation of the Republic as much as the safety of his people could permit. He even desisted a long time from demanding the succors stipulated by the treaties, fulfilling thus his own engagements without insisting on the accomplishment of those of your High Mightinesses. The demand was never made until after the united forces of France and Spain showed themselves ready to fall upon England, and there attempt a descent by the assistance of a formidable fleet. Although frustrated in this enterprise, the enemies of the King meditate still the same project; and it is by the express order of his Majesty that the undersigned renews at this time, in a manner the most formal, the demand of the succors stipulated by different treaties, and particularly by that of the year 1716.

“Hitherto your High Mightinesses have been silent upon an article so essential; at the same time, you have insisted on a forced construction of the treaty of commerce of the year 1674, against the abuse of which Great Britain has protested at all times. This interpretation cannot be reconciled to the clear and precise stipulations of the secret article of the treaty of peace of the same year.

An article of a treaty of commerce cannot annul an article so essential of a treaty of peace, and both are expressly comprehended in the principal treaty of alliance of 1678, by which your High Mightinesses are obliged to furnish to his Majesty the succors which he now demands. You are too just and too wise not to feel that all the engagements between Powers ought to be mutually and reciprocally observed; and although contracted in different periods, they oblige equally the contracting parties. This incontestable principle applies itself here with so much the more force as the treaty of 1716 renews all the anterior engagements between the Crown of England and the Republic, and incorporates them, as it were, together.

“Moreover, the subscriber had orders to declare to your High Mightinesses that he was ready to enter into conferences with you, to regulate in an amicable manner all which might be necessary to avoid misunderstandings, and prevent every disagreeable occurrence by concerting measures equitable and advantageous for the respective subjects.

“This friendly offer was refused in a manner as unexpected as it was extraordinary and unusual among friendly Powers; and without taking notice of repeated representations, both public and secret, upon the subject of convoys, your High Mightinesses have not only granted convoys for different kinds of naval stores, but you have moreover expressly resolved that a certain number of vessels-of-war should be held ready to convoy in the sequel naval stores of every species destined for the ports of France, and this at a time when the subjects of the Republic enjoyed, by the force of treaties, a freedom and an extent of commerce and of navigation far beyond that which the law of nations allows to neutral Powers. This resolution, and the orders given to Admiral Byland to oppose himself by force to the visits of merchant ships, have given place to the incident which the friendship of the King would have greatly desired to have prevented. But it is notorious that this Admiral, in consequence of his instructions, first fired upon the sloops bearing the English flag, which were sent to make the visit in the manner prescribed by the treaty of 1674. It was then a manifest aggression, a direct violation of the same treaty which your High Mightinesses seem to look upon as the most sacred of all. His Majesty has made beforehand repeated representations of the necessity and justice of this visit, practised in all similar circumstances, and fully authorized by this treaty. They

were informed in London that there were in the Texel a great number of vessels loaded with naval stores, and particularly with masts and large ship timber, ready to set sail for France immediately after, or under, a Dutch convoy. The event has but too fully proved the truth of these informations, since some of these vessels have been found even under this convoy. The greatest number have escaped, and have carried to France the most efficacious succors, of which she stood in the greatest necessity.

“At the same time your High Mightinesses thus aided the enemy of the King by favoring the transportation of these succors, you imposed a heavy penalty upon the subjects of the Republic, to restrain them from carrying victuals to Gibraltar, although this place was comprehended in the general warranty of all the British possessions in Europe, and although at that time Spain had vexed the commerce of the Republic in a manner the most outrageous and unexampled.

“It is not only on these occasions that the conduct of your High Mightinesses towards the King, and towards the enemy of his Majesty, forms a most striking contrast in the eyes of all the impartial world. No one is ignorant of that which passed in the too well known affair of Paul Jones. The asylum granted to this pirate was directly contrary to the treaty of Breda of 1667, and even to the proclamation of your High Mightinesses of 1776. Further, although your High Mightinesses have kept, and still keep a silence the most absolute with regard to the just demands of his Majesty, you have been forward, at the simple request of the King’s enemies, to assure them of an absolute and unconditional neutrality, without any exception of the ancient engagements of the Republic, founded upon the most solemn treaties. Nevertheless, the King would still persuade himself that all which has passed ought to be attributed less to the disposition of your High Mightinesses than to artifices of his enemies, who, after having excited discord among the members of the State, seek, alternately by menaces and by promises, to animate them against their natural ally. His Majesty cannot believe that your High Mightinesses have taken the resolution to abandon a system which the Republic has pursued for more than a century, with so much success and so much glory.

“But if such was the resolution of your High Mightinesses—if you were determined to forsake the alliance with Great Britain, in

refusing to fulfil the engagements of it—there would arise from this resolution a new order of things. The King would perceive such an alteration with a sensible regret ; but the consequences which would follow from it would be necessary and unavoidable. If by an act of your High Mightinesses the Republic should cease to be the ally of Great Britain, the relations between the two nations will be totally changed, and they will no longer have any other ties or relation than those which subsist between nations neutral and friendly. Every treaty being reciprocal, if your High Mightinesses will not fulfil your engagements, the consequence will be that those of his Majesty will cease to be obligatory. It is in pursuance of these incontestable principles that his Majesty has ordered the subscriber to declare to your High Mightinesses, in a manner the most friendly, but at the same time the most serious, that if, contrary to his just expectations, your High Mightinesses do not give him, within the term of three weeks, to be computed from the day of presentation of this memorial, a satisfactory answer touching the succors demanded eight months ago, his Majesty, considering this conduct as a departure from the alliance on the part of your High Mightinesses, will no longer consider the United Provinces in any other light than that of other neutral Powers not privileged by treaties ; and consequently will, without further delay, suspend conditionally, and until further orders, in regard to their subjects, all the particular stipulations of the treaties between the two nations, particularly those of the treaty of 1674, and will hold himself simply bound by the general principles of the law of nations, which ought to serve as rules between Powers neutral, and not privileged.

JOSEPH YORKE.”

On the 24th of March the States-General made the following answer to Sir Joseph Yorke :

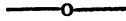
“ That their High Mightinesses had resolved to represent to his Britannic Majesty, by the Count deWelderren, their Envoy Extraordinary, that having seen by the memorial of the Ambassador, dated the 21st of March, that his Majesty fixed a term of three weeks to have a satisfactory answer touching the succors demanded, their High Mightinesses wished to satisfy, as soon as possible, the desires of his Britannic Majesty, by giving him a positive answer ; but they foresaw that the form of government inherent in the Constitution of the Republic would not permit them to complete their answer in the

time specified, as the memorial of the Ambassador having become an object of the deliberations of the representative Provinces, it was necessary to wait the resolution of the several States, the Assemblies of which were now sitting, or about to sit; that their High Mightinesses assured themselves that his Majesty, considering these reasons, would not persist rigorously in the time fixed, to the end that their High Mightinesses might have that of forming, in a manner conformable to the Constitution of the Republic, (in which their High Mightinesses had not a right to make any alteration,) an answer to the memorial of the Ambassador, their High Mightinesses promising to neglect nothing for accelerating, as much as possible, the deliberations upon the subject, and they pray the Ambassador to support these representations with his good offices with the King, his master."

Sir Joseph Yorke, after reading this answer, replied, that whatever might be his desire to satisfy the inclinations of their High Mightinesses, the orders of the King, his master, would not permit him upon this occasion; that, however, he doubted not that they would be equally satisfied by the representations with which their High Mightinesses had charged the Count de Welderen at the Court of London.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 3d, 1780.

Sir,

The fermentation in England has already distressed the Administration and overawed some of the members of the House of Commons, but there is room to suspect that this is chiefly to be attributed to the approach of an election. The petitions are very far from being universal, and the congress of the sub-committees is not yet numerous.

At a meeting of these from York, Surry, Middlesex, Sussex, Gloucester, Hertford, Kent, Huntington, Dorset, Bucks, Chester, Devon, and Essex, from the cities of London, Westminster, Gloucester, and the towns of Newcastle and Nottingham, holden at the St. Albans tavern, and afterwards by adjournment at the great room in

King street, St. James, on the 11th, 14th, 15th, 17th, 18th, and 20th days of March, 1780, the Reverend Christopher Wyvill in the chair, a memorial was agreed on, containing reasons for a plan of association.

They affirm that there is a despotic system, and they date the commencement of it nearly from the beginning of the present reign, and they say that they have arrived at the crisis which the wisest of the political writers marked for the downfall of British liberty, when the legislative body shall become as corrupt as the executive. They should have said more corrupt, because that is undoubtedly the fact at present, as well as the case stated by Montesquieu.

They say that by the unhappy war with America, begotten in the first instance of this despotic system, and nursed with a view of giving completion to it, the fatal influence of the Crown has been armed with more ample means for enslaving Parliament, while the nation has visibly sunk almost into beggary. Never did any country experience so sudden a reverse from prosperity to depression. They state the fall of rents, the accumulation of taxes, and the stagnation of all credit. They then run a long course of reasoning to show the utility, importance, and necessity of the several things they recommended to the people of England, which are all comprehended in a few propositions.

1st. They recommend perseverance in the petitions, and an association in support of them.

2dly. A new law for taking the suffrages of the people at elections to prevent expense and influence.

3dly. To adopt, as part of their general associations, the following propositions :

I. That an examination be made into all the branches of the receipt, expenditure, and mode of keeping and passing accounts of public money.

II. One hundred, at least, of additional members of counties in the House of Commons.

III. That the members of the House of Commons be *annually elected*.

IV. That it is recommended to all voters to support, at the next election, such candidates as shall, by signing the association or otherwise, satisfy them that they will support these regulations in Parliament.

In the Middlesex committee, at the Masons' tavern, March 24th, this circular letter and the memorial it contained were unanimously approved, and their members in the general congress thanked. In the Westminster committee, King's Arms tavern, Palace yard, March 15th, 1780, it was resolved, "that by the resolution of the general meeting, directing this committee to prepare a plan of association on legal and constitutional grounds, to support the laudable reform, and such other measures as may conduce to restore the freedom of Parliament, this committee conceive themselves bound to enter into the consideration of every question tending to establish the independency of Parliament on a solid and durable basis. That the duration of Parliament and the state of the representatives of the people are questions immediately under this description; that a sub-committee, consisting of seven persons, be appointed to inquire into the state of the representation of the nation and make a report." On the 20th of March the sub-committee reported. The report is dated the 19th.

"That new Parliaments, to be holden once in every year, were the ancient usage, and declared to be the hereditary and indefeasible right of the people of England; that the 6th of William and Mary is the first which attempts to appoint the time of the continuance of Parliament to be for the term of three years, though the same act recognizes the ancient laws and statutes of this kingdom, by which annual Parliaments were confirmed, and declares that frequent and new Parliaments tend very much to the happy union and good agreement of the King and people; that by the 1st of George I. the Parliament then chosen for three years, (by acquiescence of the people to the act of William and Mary, on the faith of its declaring that from henceforth no Parliament whatsoever that shall at any time hereafter be called, assembled, or held, shall have any continuance for longer than three years only at the furthest,) did pass an act to prolong its continuance to seven years; that temporary considerations are stated in the preamble to the act as the principal motives for the act itself; that the 6th of William and Mary is worded as if declaratory of what was conceived, however falsely, to have been the constitution of the country, but that the septennial act assumes a power of altering the duration of Parliament at pleasure; that these alterations in the constitution of Parliament were made without communication with the constituent body of the people, and have

been continued without the sanction of their approbation ; that the septennial bill was strongly opposed in Parliament, and a direct infringement on the constitution, and a flagrant breach of trust towards the constituent body ; that it was supported almost entirely on the principle of expediency ; that the voice of the people appeared strongly against it, in many respectable petitions to Parliament on the occasion, and that a constitutional protest was entered by the Peers, stating that frequent Parliaments were the fundamental constitution of the kingdom ; that the House of Commons ought to be chosen by the people, and when continued for a longer time than they were chosen for, they were then chosen by the Parliament, and not by the people ; that they conceived the bill, so far from preventing corruption, would rather increase it, for the longer a Parliament was to last the more valuable to corrupt ones would be the purchase, and that all the reasons which had been given for long Parliaments might be given for making them perpetual, which would be an absolute subversion of the third estate ; that various motions were afterwards made, and strongly supported, for a repeal of the septennial act, particularly a motion for annual Parliaments in 1774, which was lost only by a majority of thirty-two ; that the city of London, and other respectable bodies, continued to instruct their representatives to prosecute this object in the most vigorous manner, as essentially necessary to the independency and integrity of Parliament, the rights of the people, and the prosperity of their country ; that by the 8th of Henry the Sixth, the Parliament, then elected by the commonalty at large, passed an act to disfranchise the greater part of their constituents, by limiting the right of election of Knights of the Shire to persons having free lands, or tenants, to the value of forty shillings by the year, at the least, which restriction has ever since continued ; that many towns and boroughs, formerly entitled for their repute and reputation to send members to Parliament, have since fallen into decay, yet continue to have a representation equal to the most opulent counties and cities, while other towns and places, which have risen into consideration, and become populous and wealthy, have no representatives in Parliament ; that the number of the inhabitants of England and Wales is above five millions ; that of these twelve hundred thousand are supposed capable of voting, as the constitution stood before the restrictive act above quoted ; that not more than two hundred and fourteen thousand are at present permitted to vote ;



that out of these, one hundred and thirty thousand freeholders elect ninety-two members for fifty-two counties; forty-three thousand citizens, freemen, and others, elect fifty-two members for twenty-three cities and two universities, and forty-one thousand electors choose three hundred and sixty-nine members for one hundred and ninety-two towns and boroughs; that fifty of these members are returned by three hundred and forty electors; and a number scarcely above six thousand, being a majority of the voters of one hundred and twenty-nine of the boroughs, return two hundred and fifty-seven representatives, which is a majority of the whole English House of Commons, and the efficient representation of above five millions of people; that many of these boroughs are immediately under the influence of the Crown, as the cinque ports; many of them are private property, affording hereditary seats, as those under burgage, tenure, and some of them almost without houses or inhabitants, as Galton, Newtown, and Old Sarum; that, considering the representation with reference to property, many counties return representatives out of all proportion to what they contribute to the public revenue; that Cornwall pays to land tax and subsidy sixteen parts out of five hundred and thirty, and sends forty-four members to Parliament, while Middlesex pays not less in proportion than two hundred and fifty-six, and sends eight members; so that the inequality of the representation of this country with regard to property is still greater than when estimated according to the numbers of its inhabitants."

The Westminster committee, after considering this report, Mr. Fox in the chair, came to the following resolutions:

"1. That annual Parliaments are the undoubted right of the people of England; and that the act which prolonged their duration was subversive of the constitution, and a violation, on the part of the representatives, of the sacred trust reposed in them by their constituents.

"2. That the present state of the representation of this country is inadequate to the object, and a departure from the first principles of the constitution.

"3. That thanks be given to the sub-committee for their very intelligent report.

"4. That copies of it be sent to the several committees of the counties, cities, and boroughs of the kingdom."

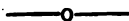
I have been thus particular in stating the proceedings of these

committees because it must be an advantage for Congress to have them all in view, and to see the whole of the foundation that is laid. They are some of the most important proceedings of the present reign; they are the commencement of a new sovereignty in opposition to the old. If there is virtue or good sense in the nation, these machines will discover it, and set it in motion; and provided the war continues, it will prevail; but if there is neither virtue or sense remaining, or not enough of these to produce the desired effect, it will probably be the last national effort made in favor of liberty, and despotism will range at large.

If the King would make peace now, he would dissipate all these combinations in England, Ireland, and Holland, as well as prevent the treaty with Spain (which I believe is in a good way, from a letter which I lately saw from Mr. Carmichael) from giving advantages to Spain and disadvantages to England, which can never be altered. But if he continues the war long, if he should have signal successes, these may dispel the storms in England and Ireland; but if he should be unsuccessful, the new sovereignty will probably prevail against him, after involving the three kingdoms in confusion and blood.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 4th, 1780.

Sir,

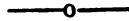
There is an anecdote from Malaga, which ought to be mentioned to Congress, because it cannot fail to have serious consequences.

The Swedish frigate, the *Illerim*, of thirty-four guns, commanded by Captain Ankerloo, on the 28th of February, at half after eight o'clock at night, met an English privateer belonging to Minorca, of twenty-eight guns. The Swedish Captain, after hailing the privateer, let her continue her course, and went on quietly his own; about half an hour after, the privateer returning, ranged herself astern of the frigate, and unexpectedly discharged both his broadsides, loaded with langrage, which killed three sailors, broke the thigh and the right leg of the Captain, wounded the Lieutenant and some people of the crew. Ankerloo, who in the evening had been obliged by a violent

gale of wind to draw in his guns and shut up his ports, not finding himself prepared for battle, his officers took immediate measures, with the utmost alertness, for repulsing the privateer, which did in fact at last receive one broadside from the frigate; but, upon the whole, she escaped in the night, by the force of sails and of oars. After this perfidy on the part of the English, Ankerloo would have entered Marseilles for the sake of dressing his wounds, but having met with contrary winds and bad weather for three days, he put into Malaga, where he went ashore to the house of the Swedish consul, where he is since dead of his wounds.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 6th, 1780.

Sir,

It may be necessary to transmit the decree of Sir James Mariott, against the Dutch ship *la Sybellina Hillegonda*, in order fully to comprehend the proceedings, which I have sent before. The decree is this :

“The fact in this case is, a Dutch ship loaded with naval stores, for a port in France, under the convoy of not less than five men-of-war, and the commander of these men-of-war, not measuring his conduct by the line of the treaty, resists, fires upon the boat of the English Commodore, and forbids the execution of the treaty. The English Commodore returns the fire. The Dutch Admiral fires again, and strikes; so that the fact is to be adjusted, and it is of such a nature as has never before happened in the history of this nation. It falls unfortunately to my share, to decide upon these facts and their consequences.

“It is, nevertheless, a consolation, that although the judge of this court may decide, in the first instance, there is still a superior tribunal, in the last resort. This court ought to judge of the case of the treaty, since, in virtue of a special commission, under the great seal of the kingdom, the judges of the courts of admiralty are authorized and required to take cognizance of, and proceed judicially in, all manner of captures, seizures, prizes, and reprisals, and decide

upon them according to the course of the admiralty and the law of nations.

“The claimant disdains to found his right in any other way than upon the treaty. My idea is, that all the maritime treaties which subsist between two friendly Powers, form but one code of laws, one great confederation, one indivisible union. They are, if it is lawful to make use of these sacred words, the Bible, the Book, or the Testament of the social contract between the nations, to be maintained inviolably, as a system, whereof we cannot break one part without dissolving the whole.

“The Dutch subjects have, in virtue of the treaty, particular privileges, superior to those of every other country, but they may overleap the bounds of these privileges, and from that time they ought to be weighed in the balance, like other neutral nations. To be found under a convoy is not, in itself, an infraction of the treaty, but the conduct of this convoy is to be considered.

“The fifth article of the treaty of 1674 is reciprocal. ‘If any ship belonging to the subjects of his Majesty of Great Britain shall, in open sea, or elsewhere, out of the dominions of the said States, meet any ships-of-war of the Lords the States, or privateers belonging to their subjects, the said ships of the Lords the States, or of their subjects, shall keep at a convenient distance, and only send out their boat, with two or three men only, to go on board such ships or vessels of the subjects of his Majesty, in order that the passport, or sea-brief, concerning the property thereof, according to the form hereunder annexed, may be produced to them by the captain or master of such ship or vessel belonging to the subjects of his Majesty; and the said ships, so producing the same, shall freely pass; and it shall not be lawful to molest, search, detain, or force such ship from her intended voyage. And the subjects of the Lords the States shall enjoy, in all things, the same liberty and immunity, they in like manner showing their passport, or sea-brief, made out according to the form prescribed at the foot of this treaty.’

“The sixth article is, ‘If any ship or vessel belonging to the English or other subjects of Great Britain, shall be met making into any port belonging to an enemy of the Lords the States, or, on the other side, if any ship belonging to the United Provinces of the Netherlands, or other subjects of the Lords the States, shall be met in her way, making into any port under the obedience of the enemies

of his said Majesty, such ships shall show, not only a passport, or sea-brief, according to the form hereunder subscribed, wherewith she is to be furnished, but also her certificate or cocket, containing the particulars of the goods on board, in the usual form, by the officers of the customs of that port, from whence she came ; whereby it may be known whether she is laden with any of the goods prohibited by the third article of this treaty.'

“Such are the terms of this treaty, which this court will not declare to be now in force ; but one of the parties may renounce it ; and it would be from that time, so far forth, a good cause of annulling it. It could not ever have been the intention of the contracting parties that the merchant ships of the subjects of the States should become the transport vessels for the service of the King of France, nor that the men-of-war of the States should serve as a convoy to them. It is impossible to form an idea more unworthy of the sovereignty of the States. The idea of granting a convoy to all Dutch ships destined for the port of an enemy is offensive, and still more aggravating when accompanied with resistance, or orders to resist, when they go so far as to reject *ipso facto* all the ordinary ways of public justice, and to set at nought the articles which had been established to prevent the consequences of the intervention of neuters, as parties in a war, by public acts ; articles which stipulate a legal procedure for discussing all the points in controversy before the courts of Admiralty reciprocally ; and in case the parties should not be satisfied, they ought to be finally heard by their respective sovereigns in council. Such is the tenor of the twelfth article of the treaty of 1674.

“In the present state of the cause, this court will not say, nevertheless, that the States have annulled the treaty ; because the orders of Admiral Byland have not appeared, and his conduct may be disavowed by the States ; but even the granting of a convoy, and, above all, of a squadron, is essentially offensive, since the Dutch subjects are already sufficiently armed by the treaty, and by the methods of redress prescribed, which are the same with all maritime nations. The party complaining follows the ship and the papers which she has on board into the jurisdiction of the place and country where he is carried, as the subject, who in the nature of things and proceedings, can only of necessity be judged there, where the original proofs exist ; the judges specially constituted for the decision of

prizes, both in the first instance and in the last resort, are, by common consent, charged to hear and determine all national differences between Powers who are friends and allies, like the Council of Amphycions in ancient Greece. But seamen do not well comprehend this language. They speak roughly, like the mouths of their cannons. If this vessel had fired upon the boat, and any one had thereby lost his life, I think I should not have hesitated to condemn her upon general principles. Neither Admiral Byland nor his instructions are before me. I know not how to give a sentence against him or his vessels; nevertheless, he ought not to have fired upon the boat of Commodore Fielding; but he was bound to send to him his boat, and to propose an interview and an amicable conference. He might have made him a visit, which he immediately would have returned; and all the captains of the Dutch merchant ships might have been ordered on board the English Commodore, to produce their passports and cockets. The effect of his resistance is thus the cause, that, although I do not declare the treaty null generally, nevertheless, in retaliation to these vessels taken in time of resistance, I ought to declare the ship forfeited of its privilege, and foreclosed of the treaty, by the act of M. Byland. There was certainly never any vessel under convoy without instructions, at least in her course, and without signals. If the claimants had not withheld them it would have appeared whether the Dutch Admiral ought or ought not to have escorted these ships even into the ports of France, which would have aggravated the offence against the treaty. A convoy of a single ship, destined for the States, destined for the colonies of the States, or loaded generally with innocent commodities, is, in itself, inoffensive; because, in these times, there are in all the seas little pirates, furnished with all sorts of commissions, American, French, Spanish, and English; but a squadron of a line-of-battle ships, and which appears force [?] even to the treaty, which they claim the benefit of, is a serious affair. To engage in hostilities is not the way of protecting commerce; and those who have solicited the States to grant such a convoy, were rather factious Americans or intriguing French politicians, than solid, sensible Dutchmen, true and real friends of their country. There is certainly among them a number of worthy people, who can never desire to become, in fact, a Province, under the obedience of the King of France or his resident Minister.

“The case of the Swedish convoy is not applicable to this case. That convoy had not made any resistance. The ships entered the Downs by the bad weather, and were there taken without their convoy, which came to anchor near them. This was represented, and the course of justice was followed. The ship’s papers were produced directly in this court, the requisites were done, and the causes finally discussed according to the style of the admiralty, *velo levato*; no time was lost, either in contesting the justice or demanding right; and the captains of the ships returned contented with their vessels after they had been paid the freight, as well as the expense; and the naval stores which they had on board were purchased by the Government, by virtue of powers granted to the Council of the Royal Marine, by act of Parliament, in conformity to acts of Parliament in former wars.

“The question whether the hemp and flax are contraband is clear. Both of them have been adjudged such on all former occasions, when the quantity has been considerable, and particularly when they are not of the produce of the country of the party which carries them. The flax is as necessary for sails as the hemp for cordage; and if this court has once ordered that flax should be sold to the Commissioners of the Navy, it was because it was of little value and in very small quantity. I am sorry to learn that the Navy Board makes any difficulty upon this subject. The iron on board was only for ballast.”

I cannot go through with the whole of this decree for want of time; but the following curious and convenient doctrine ought not to be omitted:

“That which in the natural or intellectual world is called quality, is not relative. Good and evil are relative. Every thing is what it is, and acquires its denomination from comparison, degree, manner, quality, place, time, person, fault, &c., &c. These relations constitute the metaphysical essence of every complex idea in the human understanding. Hence that source, without end, of disputes, the glory of the bar, and of the schools of philosophy.

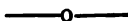
“Grotius and Bynkershoeck agree, and who is there that will deny that necessity gives a right to make ourselves masters of every thing, without the seizure of which a nation cannot defend herself? As in relation to want, if the enemy, on one part, is in want of stores, the want to intercept them on the other is equal. And in relation to

blockades, every port of the enemy is blocked relative to a neutral vessel loaded with stores, which is seized, and by consequence blocked or hindered to go there. It imports little that whether the blockade be made across the narrows at Dover, or off the harbor at Brest or L'Orient. If you are taken you are blocked. Great Britain, by her insular situation, blocks naturally all the ports of Spain and France. She has a right to avail herself of this situation as a gift of Providence.

“In fine, it is necessary to observe that the claimants, founding themselves upon the privilege of the treaty, have not a single paper on board to prove the property of the cargo, in which respect all are defective. The sentence then is, that, under the circumstances of this case, the claim of privilege is rejected, and that the Dutch master be enjoined to produce his sailing orders, and certificates and cockets from the custom-house of the port from whence the ship sailed, according to the stipulations of the sixth article of the treaty of 1674. The hemp and flax are condemned as contraband on board of this ship, and the owners of the iron are held to prove their property.”

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 7th, 1780.

Sir,

There are several articles of intelligence to-day which are connected with the subject of my letter of yesterday. One is from the Hague, the 2d of April. “Thursday night last two couriers from Petersburg arrived here, alighted at the hotel of the Prince Gallitzen, the Envoy Extraordinary of her Majesty the Empress of all the Russias to the States-General. One of the couriers set off immediately for London, to the Russian Minister who resides there. The Prince Gallitzen, having been in conference the next day with the President of the Assembly of their High Mightinesses, relative to the said despatches, this Minister sent back the next night after his arrival, the same courier. From that time the report runs, that the object of these despatches was to communicate to the Republic the measures



taken by Russia, with some of the northern Powers, for ensuring respectively the safety of the navigation and commerce of their subjects, and to invite the States-General to enter into the same arrangements."

The other is from Constantinople, the 14th of February. "The privateers continue to vex the neutral ships in the seas of the Grand Seignior, by visiting and stopping them wherever they find them, and even without any discretion, at the entry of the ports and under the guns of our fortresses. The French frigate the *Gracieuse*, which lay at anchor in the road of Cyprus, having learned that an English privateer had brought into the port of this island a French prize, sent to her some boats armed to retake her, which they could not accomplish, however, without having some men killed on both sides. The English consul having carried his complaints to the Government of the island, of a violation of the laws of nations, and demanded assistance, he was so well succored that the French were obliged to abandon the prize, and all of their nation who were in the island came very near being massacred by the Turks. As the Porte has also been informed that, on the other hand, the ship *Smyrna*, of Rotterdam, has run a risk of undergoing the same fate with the ship of Captain Kinder, of Amsterdam, and perhaps to suffer treatment still harder, and in sight of the city of Smyrna, she has not only resolved to send new orders to all the commandants, to enjoin them very seriously to observe a neutrality the most exact, by fulfilling their duty, but she has also testified her sensibility in regard to all these depredations to the Ambassadors of the Courts of France and England, by sending to them last Saturday a representation in writing, purporting that as the Porte had not failed to observe during the war between France and England an exact and perfect neutrality, to facilitate their commerce upon an equal footing, and to afford to their ships all possible safety in her seas, it was natural that she should, and ought to, expect that the two Powers would answer her conduct with a sincere friendship. That at the news of the first differences arisen between the two Kingdoms, there were conferences held with their Ambassadors, in which it was agreed, upon an equal footing, that the rules of the sea should not be violated, and that they should be, on the contrary, exactly observed and respected. That in consequence of this agreement, the Porte had not neglected any thing to fulfil her engagements by giving orders to all her

commanders of fortresses and castles in the Empire to protect the ships-of-war and merchantmen against every attack, and not to suffer that any hostilities should be commenced in the ports of the Grand Seignior, and under the cannon and in sight of his fortresses.

“But in spite of all these measures, these Powers had not taken care to observe them, which was the cause that no nation could now navigate freely and safely; that even to this time the Porte had not received the least answer on the subject of a regulation of neutrality, which had been formed upon the footing of that which had been established during former wars between Christian Powers, and of which communication had been made to the said Ambassadors, with a view to put a stop to the intolerable irregularities which had taken place in his seas, and to the end to prevent in consequence continual complaints and representations. That the Porte was informed foreign privateers held his ports blocked up, and forced the ships which entered into them or went out, without even excepting the Turkish vessels, to submit to their unjust visits and searches.

“That such a conduct being contrary to the honor of the Empire, the Porte ought to determine, as soon as possible, and communicate to the belligerent Powers, a good regulation, to the end, to procure by that means repose to his subjects, whom Providence had confided to his care; and to this end it was necessary that the Ambassadors of these two Powers should be advertised to request their Courts in the first place, to send, as soon as possible, to the captains and officers of ships armed for war, or privateers, precise orders, and as some time must pass before they can receive such orders, the Porte hopes that the gentlemen, the Ambassadors, will be so good, in the mean time, as to order the captains and officers to suspend their operations and abstain from all acts of hostility.

“And as in consequence of the ancient regulations, every time that any vessels of war or armed ships come into the seas of the Grand Seignior, the foreign Ministers were held to give notice to the Porte of the object of their expedition or voyage, of their destination, and of the time they were to stay, it could not but be regarded as unreasonable, and entirely contrary to the reciprocal friendship, if these formalities should not be observed; the Porte considering it as one of its principal duties to employ all possible means to procure the tranquillity of its merchants, to protect their possessions against all force and injustice, as also to grant its protection to the subjects

of the belligerent Powers, and those of other Powers who are equally good friends of this Empire."

The Porte finishes by giving notice to the Ambassadors that the Capitan Pacha was ordered to oppose himself in a friendly manner to the enterprises of those who should pursue the ancient proceedings, and to protect the merchants and the ships of all nations who carry on commerce in the countries of this empire whose sovereigns live in friendship with the Porte.

A third is a letter from Petersburg, of March 7: "The rencounter which the Dutch convoy, on going out of the Texel the latter end of December, under the command of Admiral Byland, had with the English squadron under Commodore Fielding, as well as the violent and hostile manner in which they made prize of this convoy, have occasioned here the greatest astonishment; and it is very much desired to know the consequences of this measure, which is generally considered as very offensive to the Republic of the United Provinces, and derogatory both to the treaties subsisting between the two nations, to the law of nations, and to the respect which ought to take place between two free and independent Powers."

But that which is thought more extraordinary still, is, that the Court of London should have ordered a step so violent and insulting, at a time when, having to maintain a war so dangerous as that against France, Spain, and the United States of America, her situation must appear not less anxious than dangerous, which this Court itself seems to acknowledge, by representing, as she has done, that not finding herself in a condition to oppose the dangerous designs of the House of Bourbon, (which, if you believe her, threaten the safety of all Europe,) she believed herself consequently to have cause to demand succors here, as well as from the Republic of the United Provinces. However this may be, it is nevertheless notorious that the solicitations of England have produced no effect here, which has given no small satisfaction to those who consider in their proper point of light the designs and the conduct of this Power since the commencement of this war against the liberty of commerce and the navigation of free and independent Powers, by means of which people in general seem so much the more pleased with the present resolution taken by her Majesty the Empress of all the Russias, relative to the said solicitation, as well as with the system of neutrality which she has adopted; because, without this wise measure, there is no doubt but Great

Britain would have pushed much further the irregularity of her proceedings.

The English who are here exert themselves as much as they can to justify, and even to praise, this proceeding of their nation towards the said convoy; but in vain have they attempted to induce the public to adopt this error, by advancing boldly that the Court of Russia approves the violence which they have exercised in this rencounter. No man believes them, since, in fact, it is impossible that the Empress can approve an action so diametrically opposite to the tenor of treaties, to the law of nations, as well as to the dignity of a sovereign and independent Power, the injustice of which is so notorious that, if it had been committed with similar circumstances upon the Russian flag, the Princess herself would have been the first to have condemned it. Thus the reports which the English propagate here, of the approbation given to these proceedings, imply so much the more of a manifest contradiction to the sentiments and manner of thinking of the Empress and her Ministers, that it is well known that from the beginning of the present troubles the Court of Russia has made representations and complaints against that of London, for the violent and arbitrary manner of acting which this last has indulged herself in, against the navigation and commerce of neutral Powers, from whence it has resulted that other nations, in imitation of this proceeding, have embarrassed business more and more, until there exists no safety for any, which causes the greatest embarrassment to merchants and the freighters of ships.

I ought to add to this letter that the English emissaries, who propagate false news every where and about every thing, having circulated a report that the Porte was discontented with the peace made with Russia, the Grand Seignior thought it necessary to order the interpreter of the Court to declare to all foreign Ministers that the Sultan and all his Ministers had every reason to be very well satisfied with the accommodation with the Empress of Russia, and that he was determined to maintain religiously all the articles contained in that treaty. All these things tend to show that the state of Europe continues the same, and that England, instead of getting an ally, is likely to have a combination of all maritime Powers to bring her to reason.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL, SECRETARY OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AT MADRID.

Paris, April 8th, 1790.

Sr.

I have this moment the honor of your letter from Madrid of the 29th of February, as I suppose, although the month is not mentioned. I thank you, sr. for commencing a correspondence which I have for some time wished to begin. I wrote to Mr. Jay at Madrid, on the 22d of February, and wish to know if he has received the letter. It is certainly proper that those who are entrusted abroad should maintain a correspondence, and cultivate a good understanding with each other, because, although their departments are in some respects separate, yet in others they are intimately connected. From all that I heard in Spain, I expected that you would meet with an agreeable reception at Madrid: and I am much pleased to learn from you that I was not mistaken.

I have sometimes wondered at the slowness of Spain in making a treaty with us: but, when I reflected upon a certain secret article, my surprise ceased. We are already bound in a treaty to her, but she is not bound to us. It would be ungenerous in her, however, to hold us long in this situation. The treaty, notwithstanding all that has been justly said of the advantages to us, is not less advantageous to our ally. The single article that binds us to exclude all armed vessels of the enemies in all future wars from our ports, is worth more millions to them than this war will cost; nay, it will be a severer loss to Great Britain than all that she has spent in it. Whether Great Britain has considered this or not, I do not know; but she will some time or other discover it, and feel the inconvenience of it.

You ask for news from America. A vessel from Baltimore is arrived at Bordeaux, but not a single letter to Doctor Franklin or me. She brings two or three Baltimore newspapers, one as late as the 15th of February. There has been a hard winter, deep snows, uncommon frosts, frozen over from Connecticut to Long Island, and from New Jersey to Staten Island. Lord Sterling went over to Staten Island with a party on the ice, burnt a few vessels and a great many, took a few prisoners, and brought off a few deserters. Some New Jersey people went over at the same time, and plundered

without mercy. Finding the communication open with New York, which had been supposed to be obstructed by the ice, he returned. An article from a Fishkill paper says that Clinton and Cornwallis sailed the 26th of December, with seven thousand men, for the West Indies, but that the storm which happened soon after their departure, was supposed to have done him mischief. A ship, brig, and schooner were lost in the storm on Cape Cod, unknown who or whence; all perished. Congress had recommended to all the States to regulate prices at twenty for one, which, by the speculations in the papers, was not well liked. Governor Johnson is a delegate for Maryland, General Ward for Massachusetts, in the room of Mr. Dana, (who desires me to return you his compliments and respects.) The other delegates as last year. This is all the news I can recollect, having seen the papers only a few minutes, in a large company.

The general state of affairs appears very well. I see no probability of England obtaining an ally; on the contrary, there are many symptoms of an approaching combination of the maritime Powers, to protect neutral ships from searches and insults. Ireland is in full career of independence. England seems determined to force Holland into a war against her, that she may have an opportunity to plunder her.

The correspondences and associations in England distress the Ministry very much; and, if the war continues, and they should not be very successful, it seems likely that they would save us the trouble of despatching them. I wish, however, that France and Spain were more convinced of the advantages they have in America and the West Indies. The more ships they send into those seas the more they will force England to send there; and the more she sends there the weaker she is in Europe, and the less she is dreaded and respected. Holland, Ireland, the opposition in England, and the other maritime Powers all feel a confidence rising in proportion to the diminution of the British naval force in Europe, besides the innumerable advantages the French and Spaniards have in supporting the war in the American seas over the English, which they have not in Europe; but I am apprehensive of being tedious. My compliments to Mr. Jay and his family.

I am, with much respect, your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 8th, 1780.

Sir,

It will not be disagreeable to Congress to see a list of the naval losses of the English since the commencement of the war.

*Taken by the Americans and the French.*

	Guns.		Guns.
Active .....	32	Experiment .....	50
Fox, (1st.) .....	20	Montreal .....	32
Fox, (2d.) .....	20	Alert, (cutter.) .....	14
Lively .....	20	Ceres .....	18
Hellena, (schooner.) .....	16	Countess of Scarborough .....	42
Ardent .....	64	Liverpool .....	28
Thorn .....	16	Unicorn .....	20
Drake .....	20	Ariel .....	16
Minerva .....	32	Folstone, (cutter.) .....	6
Serapis .....	44	Holderness, (destroyed.) .....	4

*Lost, or cast away.*

	Guns.		Guns.
Somerset .....	64	Mermaid .....	28
Arethusa .....	32	Glasgow, (burnt.) .....	20
Speedwell .....	14	Vestal .....	20
Acteon .....	32	Mercury .....	20
Repulse .....	32	Quebec, (blown up.) .....	32
Viper .....	16	Grampus.	
Success .....	24	Tortoise.	
Pomona .....	18	Leviathan.	

*Burnt, sunk, or otherwise destroyed, to prevent their falling into the hands of their enemies.*

	Guns.		Guns.
Augusta .....	64	Cerberus .....	28
Lark .....	14	Syren .....	28
Juno .....	32	King Fisher .....	14
Flora .....	32	Falcon .....	18
Orpheus .....	32	Essex .....	64

Making a total number of forty-six vessels.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 10th, 1780.

Sir,

There are several miscellaneous articles of intelligence, which ought to be mentioned to Congress.

One from Copenhagen of the 25th of March. "The Count de Lucchese, Minister of the King of the Two Sicilies, and charged at the same time with the affairs of the Court of Madrid, has received orders to declare to ours, that the King of Spain had it in contemplation to make arrangements relative to merchant ships of neutral Powers, and with which we should have cause to be very well pleased. However this may be, we have not any news that the Danish ships detained, to the number of twenty, at Cadiz and Malaga, have been as yet released, which is a great damage to those who are interested in those vessels.

"There is arrived in this city a courier coming from St. Petersburg, who has also passed through Stockholm, who after having delivered his despatches to the Envoy Extraordinary of her Majesty the Empress of all the Russias, at this Court, immediately continued his journey for Hamburg."

Another is from Madrid, the 13th of March. "It is said that our Court will soon publish a new regulation relative to the Dutch navigation. In the mean time, they have released two ships of this nation, viz: the Griffin and the Zandam, which were detained at Algeziras.

"The register ships destined for the Havana and Vera Cruz, which are ready at Cadiz, are to sail immediately; these ships will be convoyed by twelve ships-of-the-line and two frigates, as far as the Canary Islands. It is assured that there will be embarked on board of this fleet twelve thousand men, who are to be transported to America under the command of Don Victa de Nava, Lieutenant General. The last letters from the Havana import, that there were in that port fourteen ships-of-the-line, as well as four thousand men ready to embark for an expedition, the object of which is yet unknown. Two of our cruisers have entered Barcelona with five very rich prizes, among which, one had on board eighteen thousand guineas, destined for Mahon."



Another from Paris. "Letters from Malta of the 11th of February inform, that the King's frigate the *Syracuse*, commanded by M. Clavel, off Candia, has taken the English cutter the *Buck*, of twenty-four guns, twelve swivels, and two hundred and three men, commanded by Captain George Flagg, and that the bad condition to which the engagement had reduced her, had induced him to sink her."

Another from Frankfort, of the 1st of April. "They write from Hesse, that they continued to raise many recruits, and that there were at Ziagenham six hundred and eighty volunteers, who were to set off in a little time with eleven hundred and twenty men for America."

Another from Amsterdam, of the 6th of March. "We learn from Dort that they expected there the English vessels destined to transport the German troops for the service of England, which were still at Nimeguen; and they write from the Hague, that General Faucet had arrived there a few days since."

Another from London, of the 31st of March. "The despatches which the Court has last received from Sir Joseph Yorke excite the particular attention of the Ministry. Although the contents of them have not yet been made public, it is said, nevertheless, that in consequence of the memorial presented on the 21st to the States-General by the British Minister, their High Mightinesses have taken the *Pre-avis* relative to the succors demanded by Great Britain, which, although conceived in very moderate terms, contains, nevertheless, a refusal to furnish the succors demanded. The Republic, as it is pretended, founding its inability to comply with this demand principally upon the non-existence of the case of invasion of the British States, as a case which alone could lay them under obligation to accede to the requisition of the King of England, the Count de Welderen, Envoy Extraordinary of the States-General, has been on the 29th in conference with Lord Stormont, and communicated to him the *Pre-avis* of their High Mightinesses relative to the requisition of His Britannic Majesty, upon the subject of which the States-General will soon take a formal resolution. It is reported, also, that his Excellency has likewise imparted to our Ministry the sentence of a court-martial, which has adjudged that Count Byland was not the aggressor in the affair of the seizure of the Dutch ships

by Commodore Fielding. However, it is asserted that the Court of St. James has declared afresh ‘That if the States-General refuse to furnish to England the succors demanded in virtue of the treaties, she will give orders to search, without distinction, all Dutch ships under convoy and without convoy, and that all the merchandizes and effects destined for the French and Spaniards, which shall be found loaded on board these vessels, shall be seized and confiscated; adding, that it is neither just nor reasonable, that the Republic should be excused on her part from the observation of the treaties, while England should be held on hers to fulfil the conditions, and that thus, in consequence of her former declaration, the Republic should be no more considered but on the footing of other neutral Powers.’

“They say, moreover, that the reasons alleged by their High Mightinesses in justification of their refusal to acquiesce in the demand of England, are of a nature to convince our Ministry that such an acquiescence would produce consequences equally hurtful to the respective interests of the two Powers in the present conjuncture.

“We are assured that each man of the crews of the squadron of Commodore Fielding will receive more than nine pounds sterling for his share of the proceeds of the captures made of the Dutch convoy, and that there will be two hundred pounds sterling paid to the King’s ships at Spithead, for their part of the prizes which they have made.

“The Court has received within a few days, a great number of despatches from its Ministers at foreign Courts, the contents of which have given occasion to several Cabinet councils. Those of Sir Joseph Yorke have excited a particular attention.

“The officers of all the vessels-of-war destined for sea have received orders to repair on board as soon as possible, and be ready to sail on the first notice. The officers of the regiments of regular troops, and of the militia, must also join their respective corps without delay, that they may be ready to march by the middle of April. The forces will encamp nearly in the same place as last year; and there will be some detached corps ready to join the different camps according to circumstances.”

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect and esteem, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

## TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 10th, 1780.

Sir,

The *Memoire* of the Prince Gallitzen, Envoy Extraordinary from the Empress of all the Russias, to the States-General, presented the third of this month, is of too much importance to the United States of America, and their allies, to be omitted to be sent to Congress. It is of the following tenor :

“High and Mighty Lords,

“The undersigned, Envoy Extraordinary of her Majesty the Empress of all the Russias, has the honor to communicate a copy of the declaration which the Empress, his Sovereign, has made to the Powers actually at war. Your High Mightinesses may regard this communication as a particular mark of the attention of the Empress to the Republic, equally interested in the reasons which have given birth to this declaration.

“He has, moreover, orders to declare, in the name of her Imperial Majesty, that how much soever she may desire, on the one hand, to maintain during the present war the strictest neutrality, she will, nevertheless, maintain, by means the most efficacious, the honor of the Russian flag, and the safety of her commerce, and the navigation of her subjects, and will not suffer that any injury should be done to it by any of the belligerent Powers. That to avoid, on this occasion, all misunderstanding or false interpretation, she has thought it her duty to specify in her declaration the terms of a free commerce, and of that which is called contraband ; that if the definition is founded upon notions the most simple, the most clear, and the most determinate by the law of nature, that of the latter is taken by her literally from the treaty of commerce of Russia with Great Britain ; that by this she proves incontestably her good faith, and her impartiality towards both parties ; that she thinks, consequently, that she ought to expect that the other commercial Powers will be earnest to accede to her manner of thinking relative to the neutrality.

“In pursuance of these two views, her Majesty has charged the subscriber to invite your High Mightinesses to make a common cause with her ; insomuch that this union may serve to protect commerce and navigation, observing at the same time the most exact neutrality,

and to communicate to you the measures which she has taken in consequence. Similar invitations have been already made to the Courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Lisbon, to the end that, by the common cares of all neutral maritime Powers, a neutral system, founded on justice, and which, by its real utility, may serve as a rule for future ages, may be established and made legal in favor of the commercial navigation of neutral nations. The subscriber makes no doubt that your High Mightinesses will take into consideration the invitation of her Imperial Majesty, and concur in making, without delay, a declaration to the belligerent Powers founded upon the same principles with those of the Empress, his sovereign, by explaining your sentiments at the same time upon the subject of the protection of your commerce, of your navigation, and of the nature of contraband goods, conformably to the terms of your particular treaties with other nations. Moreover, the subscriber has the honor to assure your High Mightinesses that if, for establishing solidly a system equally glorious and advantageous to the prosperity of navigation in general, you will commence a negociation with the neutral Powers above mentioned, to the end to establish a particular convention upon this subject, the Empress, his sovereign, will be ready to engage in it.

“Your High Mightinesses will readily perceive the necessity of coming to a resolution upon subjects equally important and advantageous to humanity in general.

“The subscriber requests the favor that your High Mightinesses would furnish him with a speedy answer.

GALLITZEN.”

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*Declaration of her Majesty the Empress of Russia, made to the Courts of Versailles, Madrid, and London, mentioned in the foregoing Memorial.*

“The Empress of all the Russias has manifested so visibly the sentiments of justice, equity, and moderation which animate her, and has given, during the whole course of the war maintained against the Ottoman Porte, such convincing proofs of her attention to the rights of neutrality and the freedom of commerce in general, that, in this respect, she may appeal to the testimony of all Europe. This conduct, as well as the scrupulous exactness with which she has

observed the rules of neutrality during the course of this war, has given her room to hope that her subjects would peaceably enjoy the fruits of their industry, and the advantages which belong to all neutral nations. Experience has, however, taught her the contrary, since neither these considerations, nor the regard due to what the law of nations in general prescribes, have been able to hinder the subjects of her Majesty from being oftentimes troubled in their navigation, or interrupted or retarded in their commerce, by the subjects of the belligerent Powers. These interruptions having come upon business in general, and that of Russia in particular, are of a nature to awaken the attention of all the neutral nations, and oblige her Majesty the Empress to seek to deliver herself from them by all means suitable to her dignity and the well being of her subjects.

“ But before she shall put them in execution, being filled with a sincere desire to prevent all subsequent acts of violence, she has thought that it was consistent with her equity to lay open to all Europe the principles which will govern her, and which are indispensable to prevent all misunderstanding, as well as all which might give occasion to it. To this she has determined herself with so much the more confidence as these principles are drawn from the primitive law of nations, and adopted by all nations, which the belligerent Powers themselves cannot enervate—at least not without violating the laws of neutrality and contemning the fundamental rules which they themselves have adopted, in divers treaties and alliances now existing :

“ **ARTICLE I.** That all neutral vessels ought to navigate freely from one port to another, as well as upon the coasts of the Powers now at war.

“ **ARTICLE II.** That the effects belonging to the subjects of the belligerent Powers shall be free in neutral ships, excepting always contraband goods.

“ **ARTICLE III.** That her Imperial Majesty, in consequence of the limits above fixed, will adhere strictly to that which is stipulated by the tenth and eleventh articles of her treaty of commerce with Great Britain, concerning the manner in which she ought to conduct towards all the belligerent Powers.

“ **ARTICLE IV.** That as to what concerns a port blocked up, we ought not, in truth, to consider as such any but those which are found

so well shut up by a fixed and sufficient number of vessels belonging to the Power which attacks it that one cannot attempt to enter into such port without evident danger.

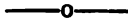
“ARTICLE V. That these principles above laid down ought to serve as a rule in all proceedings, whenever there is a question concerning the legality of prizes.

“From these considerations, her Imperial Majesty makes no difficulty to declare that, wishing to insure the execution of that which is herein before declared, to maintain at the same time the honor of her flag, as well as the safety of the commerce of her States, and also to protect the navigation of her subjects against all those whom it may concern, she has given orders that a considerable portion of her maritime forces shall be put to sea, with no other intention than to insure the observation of the most exact and the most strict neutrality, which her Majesty proposes to keep as long as she shall not see herself absolutely forced to depart from that system of moderation and of perfect neutrality which she has adopted; in such sort that it will not be but in the last extremity that her fleet will exercise her final orders to go wherever the necessity and the circumstances may require.

“It is then by assuring the belligerent Powers in the most solemn manner, and with all that rectitude and sincerity which form the distinguishing character of her Imperial Majesty, that she declares to them that she proposes to herself no other thing than to convince them of the sentiments of equity with which she is animated, as well as of the tendency of her salutary views towards the well being of all nations in general, and particularly of those now at war, and that consequently her Imperial Majesty will provide her admiralty as well as her generals with instructions relative to this system, extracted from the code of nations, and which they have so often taken for rules in their treaties.”

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 11th, 1780.

Sir,

The counties in England which have agreed to petitions upon the

expenditure of public money, the influence of the Crown, and the corruption of Parliament, are these :

York .....	December 3d, 1779.
Dorset .....	“ 27th, “
Middlesex .....	January 7th, 1780.
Chester .....	“ 13th, “
Hertford .....	“ 17th, “
Sussex .....	“ 20th, “
Huntington .....	“ 20th, “
Surry .....	“ 21st, “
Cumberland .....	“ 22d, “
Bedford .....	“ 24th, “
Essex .....	“ 24th, “
Gloucester .....	“ 25th, “
Somerset .....	“ 25th, “
Wilts .....	“ 25th, “
Devon .....	“ 28th, “
Norfolk .....	“ 29th, “
Berks .....	“ 31st, “
Bucks .....	February 26th, “
Nottingham .....	“ 28th, “
Kent .....	March 4th, “
Northumberland .....	“ 8th, “
Hereford .....	“ 11th, “
Suffolk .....	“ 14th, “
Cambridge .....	“ 25th, “
Derby .....	“ 30th, “

In all, twenty-five counties.

The first meeting of the delegates was march the 11th, 1780. The cities and towns which have agreed upon similar petitions, are London, Westminster, York, Bristol, Cambridge, Nottingham, Newcastle, Reading, and Bridgewater.

The counties which have not yet agreed upon petitions, are Westmoreland, Durham, Lancaster, Salop, Stafford, Lincoln, Leicester, Warwick, Oxford, Worcester, Cornwall, and Rutland. Hants agreed on a petition, but appointed no committee, and Northampton agreed to instruct their members on the points of the petition.

This account takes no notice of the twelve Welsh counties; these, however, are small.

The counties which have already petitioned, it seems, therefore, are a vast majority of the Kingdom in numbers as well as property and understanding; and the meeting of their committees may be reasonably considered as a more equitable and adequate representation of the people of England than the House of Commons.

Amidst all the addresses, instructions, petitions, associations, and resolutions, I never found one that dared to expose the true cause of their miseries, and to propose a remedy, until the association of the county of York appeared, which was agreed to by the committee of sixty-one, to be recommended to the general meeting of the county of York, held the 28th of March, 1780.

They declare their unanimous assent,

1st. To the economical reform requested by the petitions of the people.

2dly. To the proposition for obtaining a more equal representation of the people in Parliament, by the addition of at least one hundred Knights, to be chosen in a due proportion by the several counties of Great Britain.

3dly. To the proposition for the members of the House of Commons to be elected to serve in Parliament for a term not exceeding three years.

But the most important resolution of all was also unanimous, "That it is the opinion of this meeting that the prosecution of an offensive war in America is most evidently a measure, which, by employing our great and enormously expensive military operations against the inhabitants of that country, prevents this from exerting its united, vigorous, and firm efforts against the Powers of France and Spain, and has no other effect upon America than to continue, and thereby to increase, the enmity which has so long and so fatally subsisted between the arms of both, can be productive of no good whatever, but by preventing conciliation, threatens the accomplishment of the ruin of the British Empire."

This meeting, which is said to have been the largest ever known, and perfectly unanimous, gave power to the committee of association to call the county together when they should judge proper.

After all, even this committee does not appear to see the true interest of the country, the necessity of peace. Peace alone can save them. They are for leaving America, which is a great thing;



but it does not appear but that they are still for continuing the war with our allies.

An article of the 4th of April says, that commotions are reported to have arisen in the county of York, many of the inhabitants of which have peremptorily refused to pay the taxes.

Congress will observe by the paragraphs in the *Morning Post* of April the 1st, that they seem to be in England totally ignorant of the designs of the Empress of Russia, and of the other neutral Powers.

The paper of April the 3d contains Major General Campbell's and Lieutenant Colonel Dickson's account of the surrender of the port of Baton Rouge, &c., with about five hundred regular troops prisoners of war, to Don Bernado de Galvez, the 21st of September.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 14th, 1780.

Sir,

Every thing which tends to show the probability of a general association of the maritime Powers against the violences at sea, which the English have practised, and which other nations after their example have begun, and which tends to prove the justice, the wisdom, and the humanity of such an association, is worthy of observation. For my own part, I think that the abolition of the whole doctrine of contraband would be for the peace and happiness of mankind; and I doubt not, as human reason advances, and men come to be more sensible of the benefits of peace, and less enthusiastic for the savage glories of war, all neutral nations will be allowed, by universal consent, to carry what goods they please in their own ships, provided they are not bound to places actually invested by an enemy.

*Constantinople, March the 3d.* “The Porte having received the disagreeable news that three xebecs from Malta had seized upon a large Turkish ship with a rich cargo of coffee, rice, hemp, and other productions, this advice has accelerated the departure of two men-of-war and four galleys, which will go before the fleet of the Grand Admiral, to cruise in the Archipelago, and protect the navigation of

the European nations against the vexations of the French and English."

*Copenhagen, March the 28th.* "Captain Zagel, the courier of her Majesty the Empress of all the Russias, is returned to St. Petersburgh, accompanied by Captain Socolousky, Secretary of the Russian Consul in the Sound. They are very busy here in equipping the vessels-of-war the Wagrie, of sixty-four guns, the Infodstretten, of sixty-four, and the frigate Combord, of thirty-four."

*London, April the 4th.* "There are lately arrived here interesting despatches to Government from Sir Joseph Yorke, which contain some further explanations of the dispositions of the Republic, in consequence of the last memorial presented to their High Mightinesses by that Minister, and the resolution to protect the commerce of their subjects. However this may be, there are actually in the ports of this Kingdom fifty Dutch vessels seized by our ships-of-war, because they were found loaded with naval stores for our enemies; and already the most of their cargoes have been adjudged good prizes, these articles being considered as contraband, and their transportation to an enemy contrary to treaties subsisting between the Republic and England."

*Hague, April the 9th.* "We learn that the States of the Province of Overyssell have sent to the Assembly of their High Mightinesses their instructions relative to the two memorials presented by Sir Joseph Yorke the 28th of July and the 26th of November, of the last year, the first purporting a demand of succors stipulated by the treaty of 1678, and the second demanding an immediate and categorical answer. The contents of the instructions are, 'That their Noble Mightinesses, after having maturely reflected upon all which concerns the matter in question, especially upon the treaties existing between the Kingdom and the Republics, as well as the obligations which the two nations had mutually laid themselves under, and also in particular upon the present situation in which this Republic now stands in several points respecting her own preservation, the maintenance of her rights and possessions, and respecting the Powers actually at war, judge that the two memorials presented by Sir Joseph Yorke may and ought to be answered in the following manner: 'That all the principles alleged, and the circumstances at this time existing, oblige their High Mightinesses more than ever to watch carefully their own preservation and defence,

to use every effort to ward off all further dangerous consequences, and to this end to request his Majesty not to take it in ill part if, in the critical situation of affairs, in which the least diminution of their forces might be dangerous, their High Mightinesses think themselves lawfully authorised to refuse the succors demanded by his Majesty, although these succors, considering certain engagements, the pretended application of which it would be useless at this time to search into, may be judged indispensable by his Majesty, in the firm confidence that in the circumstances in which their High Mightinesses find themselves, his Majesty, not disapproving of their conduct, will desist, not only from demanding their assistance, but on the contrary, as a proof of the affection of which his Majesty had so often given them assurances, will permit them invariably to pursue that neutrality which from the beginning of the present troubles they have adopted.'

"It is asserted that, on the memorial presented by the Prince Gallitzen, Envoy Extraordinary of the Empress of Russia, their High Mightinesses have provisionally concluded, 'That having taken the said memorial into consideration, the deputies of the respective Provinces have sent copies of it, as well as of the papers annexed to it, to be communicated to their Assemblies, praying them to procure, as soon as possible, the resolutions of the States their constituents.'

"In the mean time, since the said memorial has been made public, it is given out that the convention between the Courts of Petersburg, Stockholm, and Copenhagen, will in a little time be confirmed, and that Denmark will procure, on certain conditions, five or six thousand seamen for this Republic.

"We learn that the answer of his Britannic Majesty to the representations which the Count de Walderen, Minister of the States-General at the Court of London, has been charged by their High Mightinesses to make to the British Government, relative to a prolongation of the term of three weeks, prescribed in the last memorial of Sir Joseph Yorke, for giving him a definitive answer, &c., arrived the 31st of last month, and is found to be in the negative, the King insisting on an answer by the time fixed, which will expire next Tuesday.

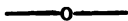
"They give out that the cities of Dantzic, Lubec, Bremen, Hamburg, &c., will adopt, as well as most of the northern Powers, the party of neutrality, and that, if England persists in the practice

of visiting, stopping, and searching neutral vessels, Denmark is resolved to exclude English vessels from the Sound."

To judge of things the most impartially, no man can doubt that proceedings so violent, and so contrary to the natural rights of nations, will make the neutral Powers *feel* how much it imports them to set bounds to the intolerable excesses to which their vessels, sailing under the faith of treaties, are daily exposed by the ships of one party in the present war.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, April 15th, 1780.

Sir,

There is an article from Hamburgh which deserves attention. It is this :

"The neutrality of the Powers of the north is decided. They have profited of the divisions which have arisen between England and North America, by selling to the former timber, cordage, hemp, and tar, which she formerly drew from her Colonies. The occasions which the enemies of Great Britain have also had for these articles have established a competition which has procured great advantages to the commerce of the north. They have every where taken measures to protect it."

In vain has England sought assistance from that quarter; her conduct has irrevocably deprived her of it.

*Leghorn, 22d of March.* "We learn from Naples that the King has purchased of the Order of Malta two vessels, to increase the marine of that kingdom. His Majesty is attentively engaged in the care of forming officers for this department. The young gentry, whom he has sent to serve on board of the squadrons of the belligerent Powers, have all of them distinguished themselves; and those who remain at Naples, under the direction of the Chevalier Aston, have discovered equal zeal, intelligence, and good will for the service of the marine."

*Madrid, 25th of March.* "Our squadrons, they write from Cadiz the 16th of this month, will put to sea without delay. Transport ships are taken up on freight with great activity, and all the troops are arrived. The following is an exact state of the armament :

“The complete regiments of the King, Guadalajara, Arragon, Soria, and the second regiment of Catalonia; in all ten battalions, making six thousand and six hundred men.

“The squadron of D. Solano; the St. Louis of eighty guns, the St. Augustine, the Orient, the Gaillard, the Arrogant, all of seventy guns, and the Rule of sixty guns.

“The squadron of D. Tomaseo; the St. Nicholas of eighty guns, the Eugene, the Damase, the St. Janizer, the St. Francis, the Assisse, and the Warrior, all of seventy guns.

“The first squadron takes in provisions for five months, and the second for four months and a half. They fill up the regiments which are destined for the expedition with soldiers from the regiment of Hibernia.

“The beautiful wools of Segovia have not been always employed within the kingdom, because the love of labor has not been predominant; but since the establishment of the Royal Patriotic Society, industry has recovered its activity. D. Laurent Ortiz de Paz has established spinneries of wool in that city and in St. Ildephonso and other places. His Majesty has assigned rewards for men and women who shall distinguish themselves in this kind of labor. This measure cannot fail to establish the royal manufacture of fine cloth which the Marquis of Enseñada had already erected at Segovia, and which had fallen into decay with the favor of that Minister.”

There are in some of the papers hints of a plan of pacification, which is said to come from the Rockingham party. The substance of it is as follows:

“Let us open our eyes! The hope of subjecting America is a chimera. Nothing but clemency can ever open a way for a reconciliation with its inhabitants. To show that we wish it sincerely, let us give up Nova Scotia, that dry, uninhabitable, and languishing colony, which produces nothing. Let us also permit the Canadians to institute a form of government which may be agreeable to themselves, and let the independence of North America become the object of our support. Sooner or later it will be unavoidable that America should separate herself from us; and I should be very glad that a permanent system of alliance should take place between them and their mother country before our ancient Colonies shall be united to France by ties too strict to be relaxed. I am persuaded that neither Nova Scotia nor Canada will remain long under the govern-

ment of England; and it is to be feared that, in contending for them, we shall still further embroil affairs. Nova Scotia is not worth the trouble of keeping it, and it will require continual succors. Canada will occasion us more expense than it will bring us in profit, and will never become flourishing under an European government; at least unless the whole country should be recovered. We deceive ourselves if we imagine that, by emancipating the Americans, we shall lose our American islands. We hold these by the strongest of all ties, which is that of their own interest. North America will not seek to make conquests so long as it shall be divided into distinct States, and under a republican form of government; and it is probable that several centuries will pass away before she will change the form of her administrations. Commerce will return into England, and into our islands, without any other motive than that which actuates all the commercial nations of the earth. If we were now disembarassed of the objects of dispute, concerning which Spain discovers so many pretensions, and if we could content ourselves with a superiority at sea, all that would result from it would be that our trade to the Levant would increase, we should become more respectable, and we should see ourselves more in a condition to maintain our quarrels and protect our rich possessions, without hazarding a bankruptcy by expenses which we cannot sustain. Our maritime power will always be sufficient to protect our islands. Our naval forces will never want any thing so long as we shall have divers markets, where our vessels may go. The northern Powers of Europe, and the northern States of America, will be competitors to serve us so long as we preserve the superiority upon the sea, and while, by means of our manufacturers, we can pay for them, or make an advantageous exchange with the one and the other. We have as good a right to things which we can purchase in divers foreign markets as if the things were the productions of our own establishments.

“Are France and Spain in want of warlike stores? Are they not as well supplied with them as we are? And do they not make Sweden rather incline to their side by means of their commerce with that country for these articles? Is it probable that they can ever shut up from us the ports of America, of Russia, of Denmark, and of Sweden, while it is the interest of these States to furnish us? It is necessary, then, to resolve to demand peace by the means which offer themselves, and which are not only able to obtain it, but may

still be preserved, and in which there is no appearance that we shall be disturbed, if, at least, at all times we preserve our marine upon a respectable footing; and if we do not, we ever subject ourselves to be restrained upon the article of the number of ships, and in the places where we shall employ them. In that case we shall not perceive that Gibraltar or Minorca is wanting to us. We shall always be ready to meet our enemies in those parts where our safety, security, and riches lie, and which nature points out to us as our proper element. Surrounded on all sides by the sea, there is one half of the nation whose inhabitants understand navigation from their infancy, and they are disposed to become seamen because they are almost educated with the sea. But whenever we shall engage ourselves in the wars of the continent, we shall never draw from them any solid advantages. Where are the trophies, so dearly purchased, of King William and Marlborough? And where is the benefit of the two last wars? The balance of power will not remain long in our hands, although we have engaged the annual produce of an innumerable quantity of taxes.

“In America we have destroyed the balance which held our colonies in dependence. We ought not, then, to lose the opportunity of binding the interests of the United States with ours by some amicable convention which will assure us their attachment, and deliver us from the cruel necessity of continuing the war with our own children. It is by this means we may preserve for a long time our insular property and enjoy still a superiority at sea.”

*Paris, April 11th, 1780.*—“The Ambassador of Russia has notified, within a few days past, to our Court, that it was the intention of his sovereign that the commerce of the subjects of her empire should not be troubled, and that under no pretence should their vessels be stopped by those of the belligerent Powers, and that she is arming to defend her flag, and protect it from insults. This declaration was to be made at the same time to the Courts of Madrid and London. It is asserted, that it is the first fruit of a treaty of commerce which Russia has concluded with us, and of a confederation which she has entered into with the other northern Powers, and in which they wish to engage Holland and Portugal. We are very inquisitive to learn how this notification will be received by the Court of St. James.”

The English Ministerial gazettes propagate a report that there was

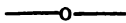
arrived in Europe a deputy of Congress to offer peace to Great Britain. Those of the Opposition assert that this deputy, who is in fact arrived, will do nothing but in concert with France, when it shall please England to propose a negotiation of peace.

The following article is published in the English papers to excite the people against the Opposition.

“If the Marquis of Rockingham should again come into the administration, his first operation would most probably be to declare America independent. This would, nevertheless, be a fatal resolution, which, instead of giving us peace, would throw that event still farther off. A proof so striking of our pusillanimity would raise still higher the hopes and the pride of the House of Bourbon. France would demand that we should restore to them Canada, Cape Breton, and Nova Scotia, as well as the islands which were taken from her the last war. Nothing less would be necessary for Spain than the restitution of Gibraltar and Jamaica. But it cannot but be supposed that the Marquis of Rockingham is too much attached to his head to expose it to danger by so shameful a dismemberment of our empire. He would then make us continue the war with the disadvantage of not being able any longer to rein in the Americans, who would assist every where their allies by land and by sea. But every Englishman of good sense sees to what disasters this plan of conduct would lead us. The ambition of this Marquis and of his party is not to triumph over rebels and the natural enemies of England; it is to humble his King, and ruin his country.”

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.



TO M. DE SARTINE.

Paris, April 16th, 1760.

Sir,

I have received the two letters which your Excellency did me the honor to write to me on the 5th and on the 12th of this month.

I do not mean to give your Excellency the trouble of answering these letters of mine, which contain extracts of letters from abroad or simply news. This would be giving your Excellency too much trouble and taking up too much time. Indeed, I think it will very probably be often, if not always, unnecessary, because your Excel-



lency's information must be, beyond all comparison, earlier, more exact, and more particular than mine; yet, as it is possible that sometimes a circumstance of importance may escape one channel of intelligence, and yet pass in another, I thought it to be my duty some times to send your Excellency an extract. In this view, I now have the honor to send your Excellency another extract from a letter of the 6th of this month; but I pray your Excellency not to take the trouble to answer it.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

END OF VOLUME II.





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